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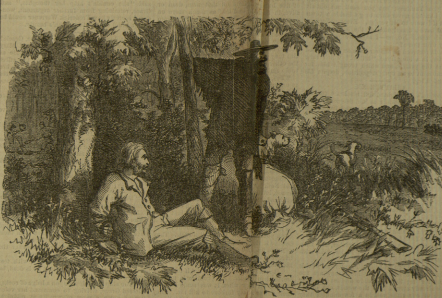

TO THE RESC[illegible]

COMPANY K.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

There's a cap in the closet,
Old, tattered, and blue,
That would be little value
It may be to you;
But a crown-jewel studded
Could not buy it to-day,
With its letters of honor,
Brave "Company K."

The head that it sheltered
Needs shelter no more,
Dead heroes make holy
The trifles they wore;
So a wreath better winning
Than laurel and bay,
Seems the cap of the soldier,
Marked "Co. K."

For eyes have looked steady
Its visor beneath,
O'er the work of the Reaper
Whose harvest is Death.
Let the muster-roll meagre
So mournfully say,
How, foremost in danger,
Went "Co. K."

Whose footstep unbroken
Came up to the town,
Where rampart and bastion
Looked fearfully down;
Who, closing up breaches,
Yet kept on their way,
Till guns downward pointing
Faced "Co. K."

Like cameras fearful
Stood cannon aloof,
Till the signal was given
To strike off a proof
Of the soul of the soldier,
To send up to Him.
(Pray God that He knew them
Though bloody and dim.)

Who faltered or shivered,
Who shunned battle-smoke,
Whose fire was uncertain,
Whose battle-line broke?
Go ask it of History,
Years from to-day,
And the record shall tell you,
Not "Co. K."

Tho' my darling is sleeping
To-day with the dead,
And daisies and clover
Bloom over his head,
I smile, tho' I'm crying
As I lay it away,
That battle-worn cap
Lettered "Co. K."

* * *

THE WRECKED STEAMER.

A TALE OF 1852.

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HARLOW ESTATE," "ST. REGIS HALL," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

Tantalized by hope which still failed of fruition, Howard had lain, long listening to the steps of his horse, which seemed now to approach and now to recede from him, while he vainly strained his eyes to catch a sight of the animal through the surrounding gloom.

He saw him at last, and, rising quietly, he advanced towards him, when Balda, who had been feigning the soundest sleep, also suddenly arose and came forward, followed by all his men.

"He has called his horse! He is running away!" said the leader of the banditti loudly, as Belmont leaped upon the back of his steed. "Fire! Fire!"

Three rifles were discharged almost simultaneously, and Polk, rearing and emitting a sound not unlike a human scream, dashed forward and away from his enemies, but not before his rider had emptied all the barrels of one of his revolvers towards the foe.

Belmont thought he heard a groan mingled with curses as he rode off, and he doubted not that he had wounded one of the band, and that he would be pursued as soon as they could find their own horses and mount them. But knowing the speed of Polk, he had little fears of the result of a chase, excepting that it might drive him so far from his friends as to diminish the hope of his finding them again. Alas! he soon found that he had more serious cause for alarm. His horse would not answer to whip or spur, except by a slight and momentary effort, and soon the animal came to a halt, trembling violently, and uttering a repetition of the sound with which he had started from the enemy.

"Good Heavens! He is shot!" exclaimed Belmont, leaping off to find a painful verification of his fears in a stream of blood which was oozing from the animal's side and dropping upon the ground.

Great as was his peril, he was unwilling to abandon his brute companion upon the prairie to be slaughtered by his pursuers, or still more melancholy fate, to become a prey to the rapacious and farsighted vultures, even before life was extinct. Nor could he raise his own hand against the life of Polk. He would lead him to the timber, which was not far distant, conceal him in its thickest shades, and return to him there if possible when pursuit was past.

To carry this plan into effect, Howard had turned nearly at right angles from the course in which he had started from the robbers' camp, and he soon heard three of their horses clattering off in an easterly direction along the margin of the wood. Relieved from immediate fears of the brigands, he quickly gained the timber land, leading his moaning animal, and penetrated it to what seemed a point of sufficient obscurity for his purpose. Here he induced the horse to lie down in the midst of some bushes upon which he could browse, and, after bestowing upon him some soothing words, the spirit of which the poor brute seemed to comprehend, Howard proceeded to provide more fully for his own safety.

The day had begun to dawn, and he returned to the edge of the wood to watch the movements of his foes, who he believed would not have the temerity to pursue an armed man into a cover like that which concealed him, but from which their approach would be plainly visible. He had reloaded his revolver, and having twelve shots at his command he did not feel particularly anxious about an attack; but, now that daylight had reappeared, he deplored the loss of time which might have been devoted to the search for his friends.

The position which he had taken commanded a view of the camp from which he had just fled, which was but little more than half a mile west of him and was only some twenty or thirty rods south of the woods.

He could see objects moving among the bushes, but he could not distinguish a human form; yet he had reason to believe that one of the Mexicans, unless killed by his parting shot, remained there, for he was confident that only three of them had passed him and gone east. He had watched an hour or more when he saw the horsemen returning at a moderate pace, like men who had fatigued their horses on the chase. They rode along the margin of the wood, not a dozen rods from it, and their course would bring them directly past where Howard stood.

If they continued to approach thus unsuspicious of danger, he could easily bring down two of them with his rifle, while his revolvers would be an ample defence against any attack from the other. He did not doubt the correctness of his aim, nor the steadiness of his hand; but he had an unconquerable repugnance to the shedding of blood unless it was clearly necessary for his safety. True, these men had sought his life; they would even yet hunt him through the woods like some wild animal, if they believed him to have taken refuge there, and here was an undoubted opportunity to rid himself of two of them by a sanguinary and fearful retribution. They deserved death—the safety of other innocent travellers made it proper that they should die—yet it was not easy for Howard to resolve to become their executioner. While he hesitated, they progressed; they have come nearly opposite to his hiding place, where they suddenly stop. One dismounts and looks earnestly upon the ground; he calls to his companions, who quickly leap from their horses and stand gazing with him upon the object which has arrested his attention. It is the place where Howard had stopped his wounded horse; a little pool of blood marked the spot, and a line of crimson dots distinctly showed the course both of approach to, and departure from, it. One line leads towards the camp, the other to the woods, and these men of the wilderness at once comprehend the story which it tells.

The man whom they had sought so far was yet within their reach; but at the same moment they seem to reflect that they are also within his, and they spring upon their saddles.

Howard had seen and perfectly understood all this pantomime, and he knew the danger it portended. He raised his rifle, he sighted his man, his hand was on the trigger, but still he hesitated. *He could not do it.* Nothing, he resolved, but the last extremity should tempt him to take human life. He was relieved when he saw the Mexicans gallop with every sign of trepidation towards their camp, and he was glad that none of them remained pouring out his life blood upon the plain, and destined to become a speedy prey to the vultures and the prairie wolf.

He remained long watching; believing that they would not molest him further, but that they would decamp, leaving him to pursue his way undisturbed. If they should approach the wood after all that had taken place, he could no longer doubt their design, and he would not again hesitate to fire upon them.

But, to his great joy, he soon saw signs of their departure. There was much preparation, and something of bustle which he could not for awhile understand; but he saw, at last, that they were lifting one of their party on horseback. He was, then, wounded, perhaps mortally by Howard's parting shot. He did not regret it; but he rejoiced [illegible] and to the [illegible] transactions.

CHAPTER X[illegible]

Howard remained long in this position, anxiously watching the course which his enemies took. They moved slowly, for the condition of the wounded man seemed to require it, and two of their mules, which were led, were heavily laden, perhaps in part with the spoils of other travellers in the desert.

They started toward the west, and if they should keep near the woodland, they would soon disappear from view, because the timber, like the creek which it bordered, inclined a little to the north from the vacated camp.

The Englishman earnestly wished that such might be their route, for then he would in a few minutes be at liberty to pursue his own way in an opposite direction without fear of observation. He did not despair of his steed; or of yet riding him away from the scene of so many horrors, and when his earnest wish was at length gratified by the disappearance of the slow cavalcade around the bend of the wood and the stream, he turned eagerly to seek his wounded horse. He was startled as he approached the animal by the sight of several vultures which had lighted on the tree tops near him, and which sailed off heavily as he drew nigh.

Some greedy coyotes, who had evidently caught sight of the expected prey, were barking in the vicinity, and Howard saw that if poor Polk were really disabled, he would have a painful duty to perform. He must despatch him with his own hands, and not leave him to be tortured, while dying, by ravenous birds and beasts.

When he came nearer, he saw that the horse had risen, doubtless to defend himself from the threatened attacks, and that he stood trembling near the spot in which he had been placed. He gave a whinnying welcome to his master, who rejoiced to see him exhibit such signs of vitality, and who hastened to examine more fully into his condition. The flow of blood had ceased, although not until much of the vital fluid had been lost, and the ball was yet evidently within the body of the animal, as no place of its exit could be found. But Howard did not despair of his recovery, and he believed it would be the safest course for himself, as well as the most humane one, to remain with and take care of him, keeping what watch he could, meanwhile, for his friends, who he did not doubt were faithfully looking for him. If he should start in search of them, he knew not in what direction to go, and he might only be increasing his distance from them, besides exposing himself to perils greater than those by which he was at present surrounded.

Here he was at least sure of a supply of fresh water, and as for food, he knew that either the wood or the prairie would supply him with abundance of game.

Having decided upon this course, the young man at once gave his attention to poor Polk, who he knew was suffering for want of water; and he began to lead him slowly through the strip of woods to the stream on its northern border. It was a pleasant autumnal morning, and the cheerful face of Nature was not without its effect upon his elastic spirits. He began to think that, Crusoe like, he could enjoy life in this solitude for a season, and that his condition was by no means alarming, even in its worst aspect. His friends might abandon him, his horse might die; but he was strong, active and well armed—and here was a river for his guide to its mouth, wherever that might be. It flowed, doubtless, into another and larger stream, but *that* he could also follow, and eventually he must emerge from the desert somewhere upon the borders of civilization.

Doubtless it would be a long journey, if it must be performed on foot, but he had health, strength and spirits for the task, and with a serene trust in Providence, he did not doubt the result.

With this cheerful view of his prospects, Howard [illegible] watered his horse, and had returned to the nearest margin of the timber, where he busied himself in selecting and preparing a sheltered place for Polk, near the stream to which such frequent recourse would be necessary. He was very actively engaged in this work, when he was startled by the crackling of a bush close behind him, and by the sound of advancing steps, and ere he could turn fully around, a shout of exultation was in his ears, and both his arms were grasped, while the swarthy and grinning faces of two of the Mexicans peered triumphantly into his own.

A third was close behind, who came rapidly up, and Howard, though struggling violently for a while, soon found it useless to contend against such odds. He was disarmed; his wrists were tied together, and then his pockets were deliberately rifled, while many a jibe and taunt accompanied the process.

But as the unexpected prizes of a costly watch and a large and well filled pocket-book came into view, the robbers were mollified into something like good nature, and having severally admired and handled the former, two of them sat down to attempt to count the money, while the third remained at his side. The eager, rapacious way in which they pounced upon the bills and gold revealed by the opened purse, their gloating eyes and trembling fingers were all observed by Howard, who believed it to be a crisis in which, if he could regain the use of his hands, a determined effort might yet give him the mastery of his plunderers. One of his revolvers was in the belt of the man who stood nearest to him, but his eyes were attracted and his whole attention was engrossed by the dazzling coin which glittered and jingled in the hands of his companions.

The knot which tied the unfortunate man's wrists together was a secure one, but the brigands had not made allowance for the delicate smallness of his hands, and Howard soon became certain that he could draw one of them through the ligature. But it was a slow and painful task, and had frequently to be suspended, while the guard turned from the tempting gold to glance at his seemingly quiescent prisoner. Hope died and revived, again and again, in the breast of Howard, but the feat was at last accomplished. His right arm was free, though bruised and bleeding, and its tendons trembling with the strain which had been put upon them.

But with so unsteady a hand he could do nothing yet: he must still wait a little for the restored equilibrium of his nerves; but, alas! the slow process of money-counting is at last completed and his captors are all again at his side.

But Belmont kept his freed arms together, in the position in which they had been tied, the uppermost one still retaining the rope, and no suspicion of their release was awakened.

A boisterous scene ensued. The Mexicans, although unable correctly to tell the value of the American bills, knew the worth of every piece of gold they had touched, and as these alone amounted to about five hundred dollars, they constituted a prize of enormous magnitude in their estimation. The bank-notes they believed to represent a still greater value, and their hilarity was unbounded in view of the sudden wealth they had acquired.

They fairly danced around poor Belmont in the plenitude of their joy. They slapped him playfully on the shoulders; they shook his purse before his eyes; and grinning with malicious glee, asked him if he would not like to have it back again. Howard adhered to his resolution of not seeming to comprehend the language of his captors, while he carefully listened to all that they said.

"He must be a government officer to have so much gold," said one. "It is not safe to let him go. What does the captain mean to do with him?"

"What do you think, you fool? Isn't Balda's own life in danger from the wound which this devil gave? He will not leave him alive to follow us back to Santa Fe, and tell tales. Ha! ha! a precious ass he would be, to be sure, to do so!"

"Why not finish it now?"

"Because the captain wanted him brought to him; that's reason enough. He understands his infernal lingo, and he wants to talk to him, and hear him beg for his life. You know very well how he has hated the Yankees ever since the war, and how he has longed to get hold of one of their officers. Perhaps this is one. By St. Paul! but the very sight of him will well nigh cure the old man's wound. Come—let us go to him."

There was no favorable moment for resistance or flight, and Howard, with his freed hands together, suffered himself to be led away by two of his captors, while a third, unwilling to lose anything which might prove valuable, followed them, leading the wounded horse.

"His hide and shoes are worth something," he said, "if we have to knock him in the head. Besides, we can get a few nice steaks out of him, quite as good as buffalo, to my taste."

"Bosh! it's too tough," said another.

"Not a bit of it; I don't like meat that will melt in my mouth. Give me a steak that will stand chewing, I say."

Their own horses had been left at their new encampment, a few miles up the river, whence they had stealthily returned through the woods, for their removal had only been a *ruse* to facilitate the recapture of the escaped man. Convinced by all that he had heard, that his death was already resolved upon, Howard determined to make one desperate effort for freedom, and he watched vigilantly for the fitting opportunity for the struggle. The odds were very great against him, but he resolved not to wait until they were increased by his being brought into the presence of the brutal Balda, who, though wounded, might still be able to wield a gun. His captors, of course, were all fully armed, but as they had, in addition to their own weapons, those which they had taken from him, they were rather encumbered by an excess of arms, and he hoped by the suddenness and celerity of his movements, to obtain possession of at least one of his revolvers, both of which projected temptingly within his reach from the belts of the two men at his side.

They had not thought it necessary to keep their grasp upon a disarmed man, whose hands, as they supposed, were securely tied, and who was walking submissively between them. But their gaze was frequently upon him, and besides, as they conversed much together, their eyes were most of the time turned in a direction which would cause them to detect his slightest movement towards regaining his liberty.

Howard's heart beat high when he had fully decided upon his experiment, which, however hazardous, he reasoned, could not be more so than submitting passively to the power of these avowed assassins. He now watched vigilantly for the auspicious moment, which many causes continued to defer. At one time the way was not favorable for flight; at another the third Mexican was too close behind him. Again, at the instant of intended revolt, he felt conscious that his excitement had attained too intense a pitch, and that he must repress his emotions, and make sure that the bold and rapid action he contemplated should not be defeated by trepidation or by the want of self-possesion.

And yet again, when everything else seemed to conspire in his favor, a lull in the lively conversation which had been kept up between his guards, left their minds undistracted, and more likely to be vigilant.

But seized with a sudden thought, which seemed to him like inspiration, he shouted:

"*Mira! el oso feroz!*"

And while the frightened men stopped, and looked tremblingly into the woods, doubtless believing that they heard the tread of the terrible "grizzly," he dealt a powerful blow upon the head of the one on his right, who fell like an ox in the shambles. Turning quickly upon the other, he struck him also with seemingly equal force; but the man, unfortunately for himself, did not go down. He staggered backwards, and while trying to recover his equilibrium, Howard sprang to his side, snatched his own revolver from his belt, and discharged the contents of two barrels into the body of the villain, who fell to rise no more.

But the dreadful conflict was by no means ended, for the third Mexican, who was the largest of the three, had by this time come up, and leaping upon Howard from behind, while he was in the act of shooting, he bore him to the earth, pinioning his arms to his side with his own as he did so. He had forborne firing, doubtless by reason of the proximity of his friends, but he now called on Antonio, the man who had been stunned, but who was slowly rising, to come and give the finishing blow to the prisoner while he held him down.

The other responded as quickly as his semi-bewildered state would permit, and having drawn from his belt the murderous "five-shooter," he came forward and tried to bring it to bear upon the head of the Englishman, which, as he was making the most violent struggles to throw off his conqueror, was in too rapid motion to admit of an accurate aim.

Foiled for one instant, in the next Antonio remembered his orders, and he lowered his weapon.

"We must bring him in alive," he said.

"But—see there: he has murdered Hubal! Let him have it! I will take the blame."

"Hubal killed! Impossible! He has only fainted."

"Besides, I cannot hold him. Be quick!"

"I will help you, but Balda must be obeyed," said the other, snatching his rifle, which had fallen upon the ground, and compelling a cessation of all further resistance from Howard by a succession of stunning blows upon his head. He then produced some cord, and (alas, that so much valor should have proved ineffectual!) they again bound the arms of their now quiescent victim, and this time they left no room to doubt the efficiency of their work.

CHAPTER XIX.

When Howard was securely bound, the brigands proceeded to examine their comrade, whom they found in a dying condition, and quite insensible.

Convinced that they could do nothing for him, and unwilling to leave him, they sat down beside him, and impatiently waited for him to die, venting in the meantime many curses upon their prisoner, and bidding him behold the work he had done.

"By the Rood! but they shall fill one grave," said one.

"Not so," was the reply. "Hubal would not rest in peace beside the cursed Yankee. By St. Jago! but it was a cruel deed to kill such a man. He was the best shot and the finest dancer in all the province. Such a girl as he has left, too! Who will take poor Rachel the news?"

They had not long to wait for the final groan and struggles of Hubal, and when assured that he had ceased to breathe, his impatient comrades lost no time in resuming their journey, out of any undue respect to his remains.

The body was placed astride on poor Polk, in a partly prone position, with the arms fastened around the neck of the horse, and the legs dangling like those of a sleeping rider from his sides; and while one of the men led the animal thus horribly laden, the other walked beside Howard, grasping his collar with one hand and holding a cocked pistol in the other.

In this way, after half-an-hour's march, they reached the camp where Balda, seated on a pile of skins, and smoking his pipe, with the apparent placidity of a Turk, was awaiting their approach.

But the Mexican's calmness was only in appearance, as his comrades, when they drew nigh, could perceive, both by the expression of his countenance and by the short, angry puffs which arose from his pipe.

His wound, which was in the thigh, was a very severe one, incapacitating him from standing or walking, causing him constant and severe pain, and exciting no little apprehension as to its result.

Added to these causes of irritation was now the very evident fact, that one of his followers was badly wounded, if not killed, by the author of his own sufferings, the sight of whom, approaching as a captive, was at the same time a source of fiendish exultation to him, and a provocation to inextinguishable wrath.

"Is Hubal badly hurt?" was his first eager question of Howard's guard, who with his prisoner was a little in advance of the dead horseman and his conductor.

"Furies! Don't you see that he is dead? And I am not much better, for my head is nearly broken—and *you*, ah! but it was a cursed evil wind that blew this blood-thirsty Yankee into our camp. Are you ready to have us finish him? It ought to be *my* privilege, you know."

"*Yours?*" said the other, grinding his teeth with rage. "Look at *me!* But we will all have a hand in it. Never fear!"

"But we have some good news, too," said the other man, coming up. "Let us first get poor Hubal down, and then we will show you the profit side of the account."

The body was lifted off the horse, (who looked curiously back to see the strange load with which he had been freighted,) and was laid upon the ground with some show of tenderness. Then, without further attention to the remains, the spoils were produced and handed over to Balda, who clutched at them with a rapacious air, and proceeded eagerly and rapidly to estimate their value.

"By all the saints!" he said, "but here is something to pay a man for a bullet in his leg; and as to Hubal there, why, my boys, he'll want none of this, except a few of the gold pieces for masses, which we won't begrudge him. A man must die some time, and his time, you see, had come. That's all there is about that."

"That's all," was the response of the men, who fully appreciated the argument which showed them how profitable their comrade's death would prove to them.

"Here is over a thousand dollars in money," continued Balda, "besides a watch worth not less than two hundred; two rifles, two revolvers, a horse and his equipments, and an assortment of valuable little knick-knacks besides. Why, boys, our fortune is nearly made."

A start, a groan, and some muttered curses, indicated that a twinge of pain had interrupted the speaker's exultation, and had reminded him that the sharers of the booty might yet be diminished by one.

"By St. Paul! but that is a dismal sight," he continued, looking at the corpse, "and the sooner it is out of the way the better. We have not to wait for priest or undertaker here. Let his grave be dug at once, and see that it is wide enough for two."

Howard shuddered unavoidably as he heard this order, which was given in a cool and business-like tone that did not, by any means, seem intended for intimidation. Indeed his distance from the speaker was such as rather to have precluded the probability of his hearing it at all.

Convinced of his utter helplessness, and of the horrible doom which impended over him, he called Balda by name, and asked permission to speak to him, a request which was at once accorded, although with a derisive laugh.

"Yes, bring him this way," he said, "and leave him here, while you go on with your work. I want to hear what he has to say."

Howard, as he came forward, could not help reflecting upon the strange mutations of fortune, which had placed a man of his social position in the power of so low and coarse a wretch as the one he was now approaching, yet whom he could not help regarding with some such emotions as he would have entertained towards a Turkish Bashaw, whose executioner stood at his side, bow-string in hand, ready to obey his behests.

"You want to speak to me," said Balda, resuming his broken English. "Say on, for your time is short."

"Why should you kill me?"

"H—l! Why should I *not?*" said the robber, his eyes flashing with sudden fury. Look *there!* and *there!*"

He pointed first to his bandaged limb, and then to the body of Hubal as he spoke.

"I have only defended myself," replied Howard, with a calm dignity. "Would Balda have done less?"

"It's a lie! You have cheated us. Besides, you are a Yankee; and I hate your whole filibustering, thieving nation. First, you stole Texas from us—then when we tried to get it back, you sent a great army of robbers and heretics, and overrun our country. You took Vera Cruz. You took our capital. You *conquered* us! Yes, you *conquered* us!" he repeated, with a sardonic look, and stamping with his sound foot. "Then you stole a third of our territory. Yes! instead of our getting Texas back, we had to give you half-a-dozen more States to *pay for the war!* By all the devils, you shall die, and every other Yankee I can catch. Look you! I lost every thing in that war; besides being made a citizen of your d—d country. I get a little of it back to-day, ha! ha!"

Balda shook Howard's pocket-book before his eyes, as he said this. His speech had been so very rapid and violent that the young man believed it would not only be useless to interrupt him, but that it would only inflame his wrath still more. But when he came to a pause for sheer want of breath, Howard replied, earnestly:

"But I am not an American. I am an Englishman. I have not been three months in the country."

"It's a lie! None of you are Yankees when you fall into my hands. Oh, no! I have heard that story before."

"But you want money. I am rich. I can give you a ransom which will make *you* so. I will swear to send it to you whenever you wish."

"Yes, yes! Your ransom would be a rope. I would as soon expect Satan to send me a keg of powder from ——."

"I will swear to you," repeated Belmont, slowly and calmly, "not only by the universal Lord, but by all the Saints whom you worship, that I am not an American, and that I can and will pay you a ransom of ten thousand dollars for my life. I will swear also to send it within the next three months to your address in any place that you shall name; and also that I will never make any effort to procure the arrest or punishment of yourself or your comrades. Come! the experiment is worth trying, as there is no risk to yourself."

"Furies! But there *is* risk. You are a sharp race, you Yankees; but you shall not outwit me. I should never dare to go inside a town again if I were to let you go. Every policeman would have a description of the brigand Balda and his men. No, no—I say! are you almost ready over there?"

Balda received an answer from an unexpected quarter, in a long, loud "hilloa!" which rang across the prairie, and which brought him for the moment to an upright position, despite his wounded leg.

CHAPTER XX.

Howard's face lighted and his heart thrilled with joy inexpressible as he listened to the shout, which he believed to proceed from some of his friends.

Around the bend in the outline of the wood four horsemen were seen approaching on such a wild rapid gallop, that Balda's first impression of them was that they were Apaché or Navajo Indians. But their costume quickly negatived this idea, and the exulting prisoner recognized in the foremost of the men the faithful Hugh, who was holding his master's spy-glass to his eyes as he rode, and who doubtless had discovered in this way the peril in which he stood.

Balda shouted to his comrades, and as they came running up, he bade them stand to their arms, and to give him the stranger's double-barrelled rifle.

"We are good for all four," he said, "whoever they are, that come yelping upon us like that—the fools! Stand ready!"

The two men whispered together, and then one of them, turning to his leader, said, with evident alarm:

"But these are probably the comrades of this man, and are looking for him: they are too many for us; they are wide awake: see, they have already struck into the woods, out of the reach of our rifles, and in a few minutes they will be behind us. We must not quarrel with them. See what one man of that people has already done to us. Hubal is killed, and you are [illegible]

"A thousand furies! I wish the whole cursed nation had but one throat, and I had my clutch upon it—bah! But I did not expect Antonio to turn coward."

"I am not a coward—but I see no use in fighting with men who outnumber us, and who will not harm us if we are peaceful."

"Not harm us? Won't they take back the booty? Tell me that, you fool! Is not that worth fighting for?"

"Yes, if we could conquer them; but who is to do it? You cannot stand (Balda had already sank back upon his bag), and we are but two to four. Besides they have the position. We must yield to fate."

Balda's first malignant impulse, when convinced that the new comers were friends of his prisoner, was to put the latter beyond the possibility of benefiting by their arrival. But he feared the terrible retribution which he was sure would be visited upon him for such an act, and he thought it wise to seek to make terms with his captive.

"Are these men your comrades?" he asked.

"They are my servants," replied the Englishman, who had decided upon his course, and who now spoke the Spanish language, in order that all the men might understand him, for he had not overlooked the symptoms of insubordination to the wounded chief. "They are my servants, and are looking for me. They have a telescope of great power, and they have already seen me in your camp. They can see, too, that I am bound and a prisoner. If you would escape an attack, loosen my hands and let me make a signal to them. Any instant may bring a bullet, and there is one of my men who would hit a wild turkey at twice the distance which they probably now are from us."

Astonished to hear the prisoner speak their language, and alarmed at his last remark, the two men instantly laid down their guns on the grass, and put up deprecating hands towards the woods, in token that they did not occupy a belligerent position. They also drew nearer to Howard, correctly presuming that no bullet would seek them while they were close to his person. Balda with difficulty restrained the further ebullition of his rage, which he repressed more by reason of the spirit manifested by his followers, and on account of his nearly helpless condition, than out of fear, for he was by no means lacking in courage.

"If I spare your life, and restore your property," he said, "will you protect us from these men and leave us unharmed? Will you swear it?"

"Yes—but you must be quick, or I know not what will happen."

Afraid of the exasperation which a shot from his friends might produce, Howard really desired to prevent it, and as he did not covet the task, which duty might otherwise have dictated, of taking these men to a distant town for trial, and waiting perhaps months to be a witness against them, he was the more willing to make the required promise. Of course he entertained no idea of acting himself as judge and executioner in their case. He had not yet become sufficiently imbued with backwoods ideas, even to think of such a course.

Balda gave orders for his release, which were obeyed with the utmost promptness by his men, and the brigand chief even rose again himself, and eagerly assisted at the work of unbinding the prisoner.

As soon as one of Howard's hands was at liberty, he called for a handkerchief which had been taken from him, and waved it repeatedly towards the woods. But the signal was misconstrued by old Noll, who understood it as a token of extremity of danger on the part of his employer. A report from his rifle followed, and Balda fell, shot through the head, without even the chance to utter a dying malediction.

His appalled followers called out "*treachery*," and were rushing to regain their arms, when Howard said to them, mildly:

"If you touch your guns, you are both dead men. Lie down, and you are safe."

Thoroughly humiliated, and terrified by so sure a shot from an invisible foe, the abject villains complied with the directions of their late prisoner, and lay down like hounds at his feet.

In a few moments, old Noll, and Hugh, and the two boys made their appearance, on foot, in the margin of the woods, whence, having reconnoitred the vicinity for a moment, they ran rapidly down to the brigand's camp, and gathered around their rescued friend with every demonstration of joy.

Howard shook hands with them all, two or three times around, and suffered himself to be nearly pushed over by Carl, who leaped upon him again and again, and dotted him all over with proof impressions of his feet in prairie sand.

His story was soon told to his eager and interested listeners, and when it was concluded, old Noll said:

"It's very strange; and unless this is the outlaw Balda and his men, I don't understand it. But I've never heerd of their being seen so far from the mountings."

"Balda is the name of the man you have shot," said Howard. "I have heard his men frequently call him so since I have been in their power."

At this announcement, the old hunter shouted, and threw up his cap.

"Old Noll has made a good thing of it this time, anyway," he said, "for there is a reward of five hundred dollars on that man, dead or alive, in Santa Fe, and half as much more on one of his followers. They were deserters from the Mexican army during the war, and they have been a sort of cross betwixt hunters and highway robbers ever since, tending to either branch of business, jist as opportunity served. But they are generally in the mountings, or on the other side. Have you heard the name Antonio amongst them?"

"Yes, there he is," replied Belmont, pointing to one of the two men, who had arisen and stood a few yards distant eyeing them and talking together in a low tone. "But I promised them my protection when I was yet in their power, and I must keep my word."

One of the men, who evidently did not like the appearance of the old hunter, came forward and, meekly addressing Howard in Spanish, reminded him of his promise, which, to their great relief, he assured them should be kept.

"We could not bring them to punishment without great inconvenience and loss of time if we would," he said.

"Inconvenience! No inconvenience at all," said Noll. "And as to loss of time," he continued, letting the barrel of his rifle fall into his left hand, "it wouldn't take two minutes by the watch to square accounts with both of them; and ef you'll only say the word, or just turn your head tother way and don't say nothin', I'll do it. *You* shan't know nothin' about it, nor break your word at all. Come, *that's* fair. They desarve it richly enough."

Noll's finger had crept itchingly towards the trigger of his gun; but Howard's hand was upon his, and the weapon was lowered.

"It must not be," he said; "not if they were worse than Barabbas. My promise is morally binding on me, for when it was made I was in their power and they forbore to kill me. They must go unharmed by so much as a blow."

Noll made no further opposition, and the prisoners were informed that they would be at liberty to depart with their goods after burying the bodies of their late comrades. Mr. Belmont's property was, of course, restored with great alacrity, the men having unceremoniously emptied the pockets of their dead leader of the money, watch, &c., and brought them, with the weapons, to Howard, accompanying the act with many smiles and graceful gesticulations. They really seemed to be struck with admiration of the man who had so signally triumphed over them and their leader, long reported invincible, and they even went so far as to make a tender of their services to him for the remainder of his westward journey. Mr. Belmont declined this offer, but he took the opportunity to bestow some very earnest persuasions upon them to abandon their career of crime and to seek a living by some honest calling, a piece of advice which he hoped would not be thrown away upon the younger and the less hardened of the two.

Of Antonio, who swore by half a dozen saints that he would follow this good counsel, of course he entertained no hope.

Noll's expectations of profit by the death of the outlaw were dashed; for when he was about deliberately to cut off the head of Bulda to serve as evidence for him on his arrival in New Mexico, he found himself debarred by the most positive injunctions of his employer. But his grumbling submission was turned into a cheerful acquiescence by a handsome gratuity on the spot, out of Howard's recovered gold, which was also bestowed with prodigal hand upon his other followers.

As there will be but little opportunity to speak further of Mr. Belmont's varied experience in prairie life, owing to the claim which other incidents in this history have upon our attention, we may say succinctly of him here, that his highest aspirations in the sporting line were subsequently attained. On the prairies he brought down several buffaloes, and in the Rocky Mountains, after killing much inferior game, including a panther and a jaguar, he actually vanquished and slaughtered one of the monarchs of the wilds, a grizzly bear.

The skins of these animals he carefully preserved to be taken home with him as trophies, for he well knew how highly valued the consideration which such brilliant success would give him in sporting circles.

On his return from the far West he passed from Detroit into Canada, whence he sailed for England without revisiting New York, though not without despatching his adieux in a long, cordial letter to his friends in that city.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

JUDGED AND CONDEMNED.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

The windows were opened wide, to admit the fragrant pulses of the June air—the amber silk hangings that separated the two drawing-rooms swayed softly back and forth, like golden clouds, and the flowers in the conservatory beyond were filling the atmosphere with faint oppressive sweetness as the twilight purpled into darkness. Still the two girls sat in the bay-window, talking softly—two girls as different as night and morning. Grace Mitchell was tall and dark, with drooping eyelids, and a rich olive skin, while Mary Waller's pretty brow was like white wax with tangles of azure veins on each temple, and blue, wandering eyes whose sparkle kept time to every smile that parted her fresh scarlet lips.

"I can't understand such sacrifices," said Mary, with a slight arch of her eyebrows. "Did *you* yourself encourage Charlton to go?"

"When he told me of his resolve, I used all my influence to further it. O, Mary, if you knew how proud I was of my soldier! I have given all I had to the country's cause—even to the man who was dearer than my own life!"

"Suppose he should fall!"

Grace's cheek blanched, yet she did not waver.

"He is in God's hands, Mary—all that remains to me is to hope and trust."

"Think of those dreadful battle-fields!" said Mary, with a shudder; "think of the carnage and death that we read of! Oh, I am so glad Fred is safe!"

"Safe!" repeated Grace, her lips curving. "A safety dearly purchased! Do you know what people will say to his embarking for Europe just now?"

"I can't help it," said Mary, shrugging her pretty shoulders. "I told him plainly that if he chose to persist in this mad war-fever, he must give *me* up! He was unwilling enough to go, I can tell you, but I coaxed and cried and scolded until he was forced to let me have my own way. His last words were a remonstrance: 'I am deserting my duty, Minnie—remember, it is *your* doing!' But I only stopped his mouth with a kiss!"

Grace Mitchell looked at the pretty childish creature with a momentary thrill of contempt.

"Don't look so overpowering, Gracie," laughed the little beauty, coloring up with involuntary consciousness. "If you choose to be left a mourning bride, *I* don't! *I* wasn't going to let my lover be killed, just from patriotism. I'm sick of hearing of our duty to the country—it's all high-sounding nonsense. The war may turn as it pleases, now that Fred is safe."

"Hush, Mary," said Grace, almost sternly; "it makes me tremble to hear you speak so!"

But Mary only pouted her rose-red mouth and said "she couldn't help her thoughts," and Grace, refraining from further argument, wondered secretly how Frederick Warrener could be such a blind captive to woman's beauty.

"What does make you look so grave, Gracie? O, the news from the seat of war," said Mary Waller, turning her head from side to side as she stood before the mirror to watch the effect of the scarlet verbenas she had twisted in her golden hair. "Well, it's a lucky thing *my* lover isn't in the field! I hope you haven't any serious tidings, Grace!"

She dropped the brush, a little awed by Grace Mitchell's pale, startled face.

"Sit down, Mary—here, beside me. I have something to say to you."

"You have received bad news from Charlton! Oh, Grace, I told you how it would be!"

"No," said Grace, gravely. "The battle was hotly contested—the field was strewn with dead and dying, but *he* is safe, thank Heaven!"

"Then why do you look so white and terrified?"

"Tell me, Mary, when have you heard from Frederick?"

"Not since the vessel sailed. Why?"

"Do you remember the dreadful winds and tempests of last week?"

Mary had grown colorless as marble—every pulse seemed to stand still, and her heart grew icy cold. She opened her lips, but no sound, save a faint gasping murmur, issued from them. Grace burst into passionate, pitiful tears.

"O, Mary, my poor darling—remember that it is God's will, and try to be resigned."

"Tell me!" said Mary, hoarsely, with tearless, dilated eyes—"I know that he is dead, but how—where——"

"The ship went down upon a ledge of rocks," faltered Grace, striving to command her voice; "went down, a mass of wrecks, at midnight. Some few escaped in boats, and when morning came they found his body lying, with scores of others, on the shore, in the cruel sunshine, where some wave had thrown it. Oh, Mary, my heart bleeds for you—my love—my darling!"

Mary looked vaguely at her companion, her white lips articulating one sentence that seemed burnt into her memory in words of fire.

"It was *my* doing—he told me to remember that it was *my* doing!"

And then a merciful insensibility came to her relief.

Weeks and months have rolled by, and the curtain of our story rises on one of the hospitals which, alas! are scattered all around us.

"A drink, please, nurse!" moans a sick man, and a slight figure glides to his bedside with the refreshing draught. It is difficult to recognize in those colorless cheeks, shadowed by a muslin cap, the dimpled beauty of Mary Waller, yes, it is she—a devotee to the cause of the nation.

"Hush!" she murmurs softly, as a repining exclamation broke from the parched lips of the sufferer. "*I* spoke so, once, and God's judgment smote me for it!"

She passed on, carrying the faintly burning lamp, and watching the daylight redden in the East.

"And to-day they are to be married," she ponders—"Grace and Charlton! *He* is safe, while *my* cherished one—— Oh, merciful God! my punishment is greater than I can bear!"

And the wounded soldiers wonder at the marvellous gentleness of their nurse—they do not know that a broken heart is ever tenderest in its throbs!

* * *

GOLDEN DAYS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Brass, copper, iron; but never gold. Life, like the age, returns not to golden innocence. It were better, I think, sometimes, that we had not been born."

"I have never thought so."

She who answered thus was a pale, thin woman, who sat by a table sewing. Forty summers and winters had not passed without leaving the marks of scorching sun and traces of frost. But neither summer heats nor winter's cold—not any storm that swept down upon her life—had really marred the beauty of her face. You saw signs of their having touched her; but every sign was in the process of obliteration. Like tempest and drought marks upon the earth, the dews of peace, the gently falling rains, the mild sunshine, were covering them with verdure.

The dress and air of the visitor, who had just spoken, showed her to be a woman in easy circumstances. The two had been close friends in early life; but it so happened that their ways in the world had been along diverging paths. Mrs. Wilton had married a "rising man," who soon lifted her into a sphere of fashionable elegance, where, for a long period, she held a kind of queenly sway. Mrs. Grover had been less fortunate in the world's eye. Her husband lacked those qualities by which men rise into high places. But, apart from this, he was a true man in all the better meanings of the phrase; and, so far as happiness was concerned, his wife had a larger share than fell to the lot of her friend Mrs. Wilton. Ease, idleness, luxury, was the lot of one; care, labor, and self-denial as to many external things, the lot of the other. After twenty years of divergence, their ways had touched again. The old regard had been quickened into life. Mrs. Wilton found more real satisfaction in an hour's talk with the friend of her youth than in days of intercourse with her fashionable acquaintance, and so came often to the humble residence of Mrs. Grover, now a widow.

On this occasion, she had referred, gloomily, to the progression of her life; and spoke with bitterness of her disappointment. Her husband was so absorbed in his business, now grown to a magnitude that taxed every power of his mind, that she said of him—"I have no husband." Children, neglected in earlier years by the pleasure-loving mother and the business-loving father, had grown up without that moral culture so essential in the formation of character. Nay, worse; had been left to the care of coarse, and often impure-minded servants, for so large a part of their time, that perversions and vitiations had occurred of such a nature visibly affecting their whole after lives. Now, the disappointed mother had little pleasure in them; now, when turning athirst from the world to cisterns where love should have gathered its precious waters, she found them broken into fragments.

"Brass, copper, iron; but never gold. Life, like the ages, returns not to golden innocence."

Thus, in the bitterness of her disappointment, had she spoken.

"Both the ages and the life may return," answered Mrs. Grover, a light breaking through her pale, translucent face. "The *age* will return. Iron, copper, brass, silver, gold. The reverse action was, long ago, commenced. History has marked its progress for eighteen hundred years. If our lives return not, the fault is our own. As for me, I am looking forward to golden days. Already the sky is lifting in the east, and I see faint gleams along the dim horizon."

How strongly were these two women contrasted! The one in plain, poor garments, with the wasting marks of a long over-tasked physical life every where to be seen about her person; the other dressed in costly raiment, with hands delicate as an infant's, and no evidence of bodily exhaustion visible. Still stronger was the mental contrast as it stood written in their faces. Years of disappointment had with one been making their silent, almost unperceptible record; while years of patient love and duty, of Christian faith and hope, had left their signs upon the other.

For a little while Mrs. Wilton looked at her old friend with a surprise she did not attempt to conceal. That she was in earnest, the tender thrill in her low voice and the sweet peace that pervaded her countenance were testimonials.

"Golden days in your future! Forgive me, Helen, that I express surprise," said Mrs. Wilton. "But what can one in your situation look forward to in the time to come?"

"As to worldly good?"

"Yes."

"I have children."

A cloud fell over Mrs. Wilton's face.

"Children! She leans on a broken reed who leans on them. I have never had pleasure in children. It has been disappointment from the beginning."

"It has been different with me," replied Mrs. Grover. "I have always had pleasure in my children. The sweetest days of my life were those spent with my babies in my arms. They were very close to heaven. In the golden years of their infantile innocence, angels were near them, and my soul had a blessed perception of their presence. I had care, and work, and self-denial; but the compensation was above all. Home was my garden, and these children were my choice flowers. With what untiring solicitude did I watch over them. Every weed that pushed its leaves above the soil I plucked out by the roots. Every vile worm, or destructive insect, that fastened on leaf or stem, I removed. I kept the ground loose, that dew, sunshine and air might go down to the roots and give them an ever increasing vitality; and I trained the branches into such beauty of form as my skill and their peculiarities would admit. There was little time for ease, for pleasure, for self-indulgence. I could not eat the bread of idleness. I often got weary over my never ending tasks. But this assurance was in my heart: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' My faith was unquestioning. I had peace and hope here, my friend."

And Mrs. Grover laid her hand upon her breast.

"And what of your children now?" asked Mrs. Wilton.

"Two are with their father in heaven—safe, happy. My youngest, whom you have seen—a dear, loving, thoughtful little girl—is at school. And here is a letter from my oldest son, now in a Western city, whither he went, two years ago, at the solicitation of a merchant who had taken a fancy to him."

Mrs. Grover took from a drawer in her work-table a letter and read:

> "Dearest Mother:—Everything is going right with me. Mr. L—— is one of the best of men, and I am doing all in my power to give him satisfaction. I could not deny myself the pleasure of reading to him a few sentences from your last letter, where you speak so beautifully on the subject of doing right, under all circumstances, for the sake of right, and not for the sake of pleasing or getting worldly gain. He did not say anything, but I could see by the expression of his face that he was pleased. On the day after he said to me, 'Frank, has your mother an income?' I could only tell him the truth. He looked serious for a little while. Then he asked how much of my salary I remitted you; and when I answered that I sent all except one hundred dollars, on which I clothed myself, he took my hand and said: 'Frank, that is the best thing I have heard of you. You are a good boy, and will never be the loser by anything done for your mother.' I felt very proud, mother. Praise is good sometimes.
>
> "Well, on the next day Mr. L—— said to me: 'Frank, has your mother any particular reason for remaining at the East?' And when I answered, 'None that I know of,' he said, 'Write to her, and convey my earnest solicitation to remove to this place. Tell her that I have two or three pleasant little houses, of which she can make her choice; and that, on the day she arrives, I will double your salary, so that there can remain no question as to the ways and means of living in comfort.' Wasn't that good? Wasn't that noble? Don't you wonder how I could keep this good news back from the first sentence in my letter? It was hard work. But I wanted to lead you on, dear mother, and not make the surprise too sudden.
>
> "Of course, you will come? There is nothing to keep you in P——. When shall I expect you and dear Fanny? I shall hardly know her—you say she has grown so much. Oh, won't we be all so happy together? You shall live an easier life here than you have ever lived. With my salary doubled, there will be no more hard work for you. The golden days are coming, mother! Write immediately. I shall be all impatience until I get your letter. Your loving son, Frank."

Mrs. Grover's voice had faltered several times as she read this letter, and as she lifted her eyes on closing it to the face of her friend, they were full of tears—glad tears, in which love's sunshine made rainbows.

"So you see that my golden days are coming," she said.

Mrs. Wilton dropped her gaze to the floor, and sighed heavily. For her no golden days like these were coming. While idle, neglectful and asleep, an enemy had sowed tares in her field, and now she was in the harvest time of bitter regrets and disappointments. In the pure mirror of her friend's life, she saw reflected the errors, the criminal neglect, the poor self-seeking and vanity of her own; and she went away in sadness and self-condemnation. But the truth which had come to her came too late. The evil had been done. For her, as she had well said, there were no golden days in store, to make beautiful the last period of her life on earth. As she had sown, so she must reap. To each comes his own harvest.

* * *

Curiosity.—The curiosity of an honorable mind willingly rests there, where the love of truth does not urge it further forward, and the love of its neighbor bids it stop—in other words, it willingly stops at the point where the interests of truth do not beckon it onward, and charity cries, halt!

TO IANTHE.

BY JOHN RUTLEDGE FITZ-HENRI.

I see thee yet, though thou art gone,
Yet hear thy voice thro' many a night;
And pages where thine eyes have shone,
Are yet illumined by their light.
In that old room at daylight's close,
Or in our seat by that dim lake,
I breathe an odor of the rose,
Such as thy lips were wont to make.

Or now it seems the waterfall
That whispers o'er so soft a tale,
Or now the ivy on the wall
Beneath the stars in yonder vale.
And yet I know thou art at rest,
I know thou'rt laid in some lone mound,
And springing from that mould'ring breast
Sweet flowers bedeck the dewy ground.

A WOMAN'S PERIL.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

I sat alone beside my window. Softly distilled the evening dews, and out of the fragrant darkness stole all summer scents and summer sounds. Tree-toads and crickets chirped in the garden, and a katy-did, nestled in the poplar trees in front of the gate, called to her distant mate, whose reply came back like a soft echo of her cry. We were in the golden prime of summer, and the deep-hued, strong-odored flowers of that luscious season made the air heavy with their fragrance. Out of the upper mystery of the night stole the faint glimmer of a star, then another and another, lending pearly tints to the darkness. As I looked and listened, my spirit gradually attuned itself to the spirit of the hour. For long I had been discordant with nature. But the soft influences of the hour brought me again into harmony with it. I saw purpose, order, beauty, wisdom, where for long chaos had dwelt.

I began, though dimly, to perceive that I had no cause to rebel against my lot. I, consenting, had assumed my place—if its duties were burdensome, its lesson only endurance, I must not shrink from them for such cause. If God saw fit to release me, well—until then patience, cheerfulness, self-adaptation.

A few tears had glided down my cheek, I had choked back a sob, and murmured a prayer for aid, before the great and sweet calm of the hour fully possessed me. For the first time in many months I was glad to be alone, and to commune with my better feelings. And just then footsteps sounded in the lane outside, the gate creaked upon its hinges, and the tiny glow and faint odor of a cigar accompanied the quick, firm tread up the gravel walk. Why should he come now—the tempter?

"I know you are here, Amy. Come out and walk with me."

The voice thrilled through every nerve, but I did not answer. If I hoped he would go away, I was disappointed. There was a deeper shadow on the vine-clad porch, and a hand sought mine.

"Asleep, or sullen, Amy?" the voice asked, and then I found myself drawn through the open window, and out upon the garden walk. "Is King asleep? and have you been alone, my poor girl? This will never do! When can you be ready to go with me?"

"Never, Thurston."

"What! Never!" The voice full of surprise, then changing to scorn. "You are not going back to that foolishness, I trust. Whose are you, if not mine?"

"I am Joseph Secor's wife."

"I deny it, and so do you when you are in your senses—when you either reason or feel. What makes a woman a wife—ceremonial mummery, or—— but why speak thus to you? You know all this as well as I."

"I know all you would say, Thurston," I replied, "and I must not listen to you. I do not love this man, I never did. But I consented to become his wife. Until I know of a certainty that he no longer lives, I will not burden my soul by vows that neither God nor man can sanction."

"Not if they have the sanction of your own heart?"

"No, for there is something stronger than love—duty, right."

We walked on in silence for some moments longer, and then I heard him murmur—"The girl is certainly distraught. Heaven grant me patience."

I did not answer; I only prayed silently. And when he would have drawn my arm into his, I put away the hand whose touch was a caress. Thurston peered at me in the inscrutable darkness, wondering, no doubt, how to account for my perversity; then submitting, at last:

"Tell me about this Joseph Secor."

"I can tell you no more than you have heard from me, from others. I was alone, impatient, miserable. My pride had been hurt, and I longed for revenge. I was eighteen, and he forty-five. He was going on a three years' voyage, leaving his infirm mother and deformed son to the care of strangers. He fancied a wife would take a deeper interest in them, in his farm—he saw that Kingston loved and clung to me, and he asked me to marry him. I should gain a home, and wound those who had hurt me. So I consented. We were married, and parted at the church door—he to go to his ship, I to come home here. He has been gone more than five years. I have never heard from him, and I do not know whether I am a wife or a widow."

"Neither, in my opinion. That ceremony never made you the wife of a man you did not love, therefore you cannot be his widow. But why do you not finish your story?"

"I have no more to tell. You asked me about Joseph Secor, I have told you all I know. He was almost a stranger to me, but he was known as a just and honorable man."

"You will say nothing about yourself. I must, then, finish the tale. All these five years and more, you, a young and beautiful girl, accustomed, as any one might see, to all the refinements of life, have lived and toiled here, the slave of a vindictive, ailing old woman, and a cross, sickly boy. You have denied yourself everything beyond the merest necessaries of life—books, music, society. Under your rule Joseph Secor's property has doubled in value. His boy has improved in health, and in manners and morals. His mother's life, protracted far beyond the ordinary limits, has ended. She has done you late justice, and left behind her her dying testimony to your goodness. Kingston ought to be sent to school, now, and it strikes me that your duties here are pretty nearly fulfilled, even if one were to accept your own factitious estimate of them. Place the property in trusty hands, the boy in school, and then, as it is almost beyond doubt that the mere form of your marriage is dissolved by Secor's death, consent to study happiness awhile. This life is a slow starvation—come to one that shall be full, free, satisfying. You love me, Amy, and I know that I could make you happy."

"Not if the dread certainty of wrong-doing were ever present with me. Tempt me no more, Thurston. I have sinned even in listening to you, and this must be the last time. Respect my wishes, my unprotected condition, and come hither no more, for even now slander may be busy with my name. Leave me to my duties. With King's love my life is not utterly barren, and even if it were, it would be only the fitting punishment for my sin in taking solemn vows upon my thoughtless lips. Will you go now, or shall I leave you here?"

"But, Amy——"

"Not a word. I have done wrong, but I will not continue in the wrong. Say good-bye, if you wish, and then forget me—you can do me no greater favor, since this intercourse that has been so sweet to us must end."

"Are you determined?"

"Yes. Good-bye, Thurston!"

I held out my hand, but he flung it from him almost rudely, and disappeared in the darkness without a word.

The aspect of the night had altered. Dense clouds had shut out the faint glimmer of stars, and the pearly sheen of the brooding sky. A storm was coming near, but a greater raged in my own soul. Already all the peace and calm had gone out of my life.

I had deliberately sinned in taking upon myself my false vows to Joseph Secor. But I had never thought of falling in love with Thurston Everett. My position as a wife had barred such thoughts. Nor had I dreamed of danger until it was too late. Little did I think when I summoned the newly settled lawyer, in obedience to Mrs. Secor's request, to arrange the business that her fast-failing strength warned her must be no longer postponed for a more convenient season, that *he* was to influence my whole future life. Not even when I found myself taking pleasure in the conversation of this chance acquaintance, was I warned.

Amidst the shock of Mrs. Secor's death, which at last was very sudden, he found me for the moment quite overwhelmed. I dare say I showed my dependence on this, my only friend, in that hour, perhaps allowed him to see what was not yet apparent to myself, that I loved him. I know that he soon talked to me of love, assuming, as had all who knew me, for many months, that no tidings of the missing ship and her captain, my husband, would ever reach me.

I was but a weak woman, young and, with all my sad experiences, undisciplined. In a fit of impulsive passion I had sacrificed all that was dear and pleasant to me in life, six years before. To punish my only living relative, my brother, who had brought home a wife disposed to patronize my youth and ignorance and to correct my faults, I had abandoned my home, and, after a vain attempt to sustain myself by teaching, had accepted the strange proposal of Joseph Secor. Most bitterly had the sin and folly recoiled upon myself.

I thought I had drained the bitter cup, but I now learned too late that a drop more poisonous than all the rest remained. I had shut myself out from love.

At first I had listened to the sophistries by which Thurston, himself I knew now unconvinced, had tried to convince me that, even if Secor were living, no ties bound me to him. But the first quiet moment of reflection showed me the falsehood of this theory. I could see well enough that a marriage without love lacked the one essential element of a true union; but I could not forget the solemn vows I had taken. No matter what had been my motive, those vows bound me to the very letter of a wife's duty, and till death set me free I might seek no change.

I shall never forget the blank despair that darkened round me as I returned to the house after the decisive interview I have chronicled. I sat awhile in the darkness, beside the window whence Thurston had called me. I neither wept nor moaned; nor could I pray, as I had done so little while before, for help. Oh, what a burden seemed the long hopeless life that stretched before me. After a time I heard the servants shutting doors and windows, and then I rose and went, as was my custom, to look at King before retiring to my own room.

I went mechanically, as one goes to a soulless duty. But something in the child's pure face, in the meek helplessness of his attitude, touched my heart and awoke its better feelings. Here was the child to whom, for five years, I had given a mother's care, and who had learned to love and cling to me as to an earthly providence. And I had talked, or silently assented to another's talk, of sending him away to the wearisome toil of the school-room, and the rough sports of the play-ground.

Twelve years of age, Kingston Secor was not larger than a child of eight. Dwarfed and hideously distorted in body, this misshapen trunk was crowned by an angel head. The pure pale face, with its halo of sunny curls, lay upon its pillow with the peacefulness of happy sleep on every lineament. As I gazed a smile parted the red lips, and, as I bent to listen, my own name, "Amy," was murmured in those tones of tender affection the boy always used in addressing me. Even in his dreams he thought of me and loved me. Was it possible that I had, even for one moment, thought of abandoning him?

I knelt by his side, and amidst sobs and broken words I prayed once more for aid and strength; and that petition which should hourly rise from all sorely tempted human hearts rose fervently from mine: "Lead me not into temptation but deliver from evil."

I rose comforted and strengthened.

The next morning, though my night had been nearly sleepless, I rose cheerful and contented. Already my duties began to assume a more attractive appearance, and I foresaw in the child's love my comfort, if not my reward. I was sitting with King at his lessons when the following note was brought to me:

"I am going away, Amy; there is nothing now to keep me at Glenvale. For your sake, if part we must, it is better that the parting should be final, and so this comes to you as my farewell. Forgive me, Amy, if you can, the rudeness with which I repulsed your kind adieu last night. I was unjust to you in the bitterness of my disappointment. Allow me to atone for this injustice by acting as your friend and helper whenever you have need of such aid. Command me as you would a brother, and as a brother I will respond.

"Amy, you were right, and I wrong. I bless God, even in the bitterness of my anguish in yielding you up, that He gave you strength to be true to yourself and the instincts of purity implanted in every good woman's heart. Your vows are binding upon you, and I shudder now as I think of the abyss of misery and shame into which the reappearance of Joseph Secor would have plunged us both, had you yielded to my entreaties.

Forgive me, Amy; think of me kindly as you can, and believe me to be Your most sincere friend,

"THURSTON EVERETT."

I wept over this letter, but there was no bitterness in my sorrow. Thurston had done wisely, and he had redeemed all that had been ignoble in his former conduct. Since he might be nothing more to me than now, I was glad to have only pleasant memories of him. He would still be my friend, wherever he was; and after the toils and struggles of this life were over, we should surely meet where there is neither sorrow nor parting.

After that a great peace fell upon me. I devoted myself to my duties with loving zeal. And, as the peaceful years fled past me, King and I drew closer the sweet ties of our affection. I loved the boy with an exceeding tender love, and he, in return, lavished upon me all the wealth and fervor of almost adoring affection, in which mingled a child's reverence with something akin to a man's devotion. I was mother, friend, and teacher. I studied to be able to instruct him, and richly he repaid all my toil. A beautiful soul lay enshrined in that repulsive form, and to the afflicted one had been given the perilous gift of genius. At sixteen he was already known and widely admired as a poet, and fame promised a compensation for all that he suffered.

One evening we sat together, King and I, in the very window from which Thurston Everett had led me forth on that night of parting. King sat on his low seat at my feet, and leaning his head upon my knee, looked up into the face of his "beautiful mamma," as he loved to call me, and recited, in his low, musical tones, some stanzas he had that day composed. I listened, charmed with the weird melody of the rhythm, and wrapped in pleasant thought. From the quaint old garden rose the fragrance of many flowers, and the hum and chirp of insect life filled all the pauses with its own strange harmony. I was very happy.

Once more footsteps sounded in the lane—once more the gate clicked. A stranger—an old, bowed man—came slowly up the gravel walk and approached the window. His dress was poor, and thin white locks strayed down his haggard cheeks.

He was all unlike the stalwart man beside whom I had stood at the altar near ten years before. But, by some inner sense, I knew him for the same. I rose to my feet, and stood face to face with Joseph Secor—with my husband!

My thoughts were more kindly towards all creatures than of old. One throb of joy I felt at his return, another that I had not sinned, but had faithfully performed my promise to him in his absence. And then I welcomed him to his home.

He had come home to die! How grateful was the sweet shelter of that roof to the man whom fate had buffeted for half a score of weary years, and tossed, at last, exhausted on his native shores. Thank God that it was my privilege to make those latter days bright and peaceful for him, and to smooth his passage to the grave! For reward he gave me love, tender as a father's, and when he was gone, I found that all his wealth had been equally divided between King and me.

When he was gone the current of our lives closed over his grave with only a quiet ripple. And for two more years we sailed along it as peacefully as before. And then, one morning, Thurston Everett and I stood together before the altar where I had once given my vows to Joseph Secor, and I became the wife of the only man I had ever loved.

We are a happy family. Love expands some natures, and I think we are of these. Thurston and I are dearer to each other than all the world beside. But there is room in our hearts for a tender love for King, which he returns with all the enthusiasm of a heart whose warmest impulses are compelled, by forces without himself, to centre upon few objects. We endeavor to make his home so happy, that he shall but lightly feel the need of other loves and joys.

SPEAK SOFTLY TO ME—A SONNET.

BY ESTELLE A. LEWIS.

Speak softly to me! lower thy voice down to
Its mezzo! Speak as afraid to frighten
A bird whose fluttering pulses harsh tones heighten,
And stir the tear-fount in its breasts anew'
Whisper in accents, softened by esteem,
As to Somnambulist who, in his sleep,
Walks the housetop's [illegible] dangerous steep,
Chasing the phantom of a glorious dream,
And who, awake, would fall into the ground!
Speak gently to me when, on cloud-rims, I
Stand, looking out upon Eternity,
Watching the white-winged soul-ships outward bound!
Sweep not my heart-strings with a careless hand,
Lest, wound to such high pitch, they break and not
expand!

GOING TO NEWPORT.

"Now, Inez, don't be a goose! Give me a kiss, and say you'll make yourself contented at home, as a good little wife should do. Newport, indeed! the idea's perfectly preposterous!"

As Mr. St. John concluded this speech, he bit off the end of the cigar intended to comfort him on his way to Wall street, and looked round towards the window where his wife stood. Her face was averted, but you could see from the rounded curves of the throat and chin that it was a very, very pretty one, and the hand that rested on the window lintel was small and white and loaded with sparkling rings.

"I don't see anything so very preposterous in my wishing to enjoy a little gay society," she pouted; "I'm tired to death of this monotonous life!"

"Home, and your husband's society, then, have lost their charm!" said St. John, gently, as he passed his arm around her waist, and drew her face towards him. But she disengaged herself with a petulant jerk.

"Everybody else is going to Newport—and I want to go, too!"

"You are aware that business arrangements render it impossible for me to accompany you?"

"Well, what then? I can go with the Meringtons."

"And leave me here alone?"

"Oh, I dare say you'll find ways and means of amusing yourself," laughed Inez, her bright eyes beginning to sparkle at the prospect of winning her point at last. "I don't believe in husband and wife being so entirely dependent on one another for society! Say I may go, George, that's a darling!"

She put up her coral mouth for a kiss, as a spoiled child might have done. St. John opened his purse and silently placed a roll of bankbills in her hand.

"They are all right," he murmured to himself, as she skipped joyfully away. "I have spoiled her with my foolish, unreasoning indulgence; but I never fancied before that she was selfish and heartless too. Pshaw! I will not entertain the thought for a moment—yet if I could but find the key to that strange, sweet, wilful nature!"

All day long George St. John was singularly absent and thoughtful—so much so that the clerks in his down-town office secretly marvelled whether or no "Mr. St. John was going to fail." But they were wrong in their shrewd conjectures for once. St. John's abstraction was owing to quite another cause.

Sunset on the broad white beach at Newport—sunset edging the green tumultuous waves with liquid lines of gold, and turning the ribbed sands to acres of diamond sparkles—and the salt sea breeze, fresh from the grand old Atlantic, lifted the long white plume that drooped from Inez St. John's jaunty Spanish hat, and gave a deeper crimson to her beautiful flushed cheek.

She was in her element at that moment—surrounded by gentlemen who bowed at the shrine of her exceeding beauty, and ladies who envied, yet could not choose but admire. For Inez St. John knew just how to set off her fresh loveliness to the best possible advantage.

"By the way, Mrs. St. John," observed a gay little brunette widow, who was lingering in the rear of the party, "who is this dashing fellow who is getting up so many flirtations with the belles at the 'Atlantic?' He's as handsome as Apollo, and rides so charmingly. Some relation of yours, perhaps—his name is St. John."

Inez shook her head with cool indifference.

"I'm sorry I can't claim any relationship—the only person of that name whom I know is my husband, at this moment probably looking over the stock lists in Wall street."

"Indeed!" said the brunette widow. "How delightful it must be to be so confident of the whereabouts of one's better half!"

Inez only laughed—she could afford to set the little lady's shafts of sarcasm at defiance.

"I declare!" ejaculated the widow, putting up her eye-glass, "there he is now—no mistaking those superb greys! And Kate Appleton is with him! Well, if he likes a desperate flirtation, Kate's the girl for him. I only wish he'd ask *me* to drive with him!"

Inez looked up with a sort of careless interest—but all of a sudden her cheek glowed scarlet and she gave a quick little start.

"George!"

"Inez—is that you? Miss Appleton—my wife! How are you getting along here, my love? Any funds wanted!"

Inez stood speechless and dismayed. Was *this* gay, nonchalant fellow the devoted husband whose life had been one long slavery to her smiles!

"I'll run round to see you for a few moments this evening," said the gentleman, coolly gathering up his reins. "I'm rather in a hurry just now—Miss Appleton wants to see the sun set from Silver Point; so, *au revoir!*"

And in a moment the greys were out of sight.

"So he's her *husband!*" whispered the widow, maliciously, behind her jewelled fan. "Upon my word, flirtation seems to run in the family."

But Inez had neither heart nor spirit to take up the wordy challenge.

"Well, dear," was St. John's careless salutation, as he lounged into the crowded hotel parlors that night, about nine o'clock. "I can't stay long, for I've promised Mrs. Fessenden to take her to the hop this evening. Gay season, isn't it?"

"You have been here a week, George—why did you not come to see me sooner?"

"Oh—why—I don't know—what was the use? You were having a nice time, and so was I. Our Darby and Joan days are over. What a splendid girl Kate Appleton is, eh?"

"But, George, I—I wish you wouldn't go out with her quite so much!"

"Why not? Where's the harm? Do I find fault with *your* manifold flirtations? Now, my dear little wife, don't make yourself ridiculous! I must improve every opportunity, for I am obliged to be at home by Wednesday."

Inez St. John lifted her tear-filled eyes to her husband's face.

"George, will you take me home, too?"

"Home! So early in the season! Why, I thought you meant to stay until September."

"So I did, but—the truth is, George, I am weary of Newport—oh, *so* weary!"

Mr. St. John gave a long, low whistle.

"There's no accounting for a woman's freaks," he said. "However, do as you like—it's a matter of no consequence to me!"

"Of no consequence!" How the words rang in Inez's ears during the slow, creeping hours of that, long, sultry night. For she had never known how tenderly she prized her husband's love, until the shadow of its loss brooded over her life!

She was sitting there, all dressed for the home journey on Wednesday morning, when an elderly gentleman, an old familiar friend, walked in.

"Ready, Mrs. St. John?"

"Yes, and only waiting for George, Mr. Spellman."

"The fact is," began the old gentleman, with some embarrassment in his manner, "he finds his engagements will not permit him to return until to-morrow, and as he concludes you are anxious to reach home, and I am returning to New York, he requested me to act as your escort."

Inez rose, pale as death, and silently placed her arm within that of Mr. Spellman, while the bitter cry of despair went up from her secret heart.

"O! if I never had come to this dreadful place!"

It was late at night when she entered her own familiar sitting-room, spiritless and weary, with her eyes red with tears and her cheek pale and wan. She had fancied it would be dark and deserted; instead, there were cheerful lights burning; and there, beside the table, stood—her husband!

"George!"

"Inez—my darling little wife!"

He had drawn her to his breast with all the deep tenderness of old—he was whispering the sweet words that had never seemed so sweet before!

"The troubled dream is over, dearest—we are at *home* once more!"

Yes, it was indeed *home*—and from that hour Inez never sighed to leave it more. The remedy had been severe, but it was also efficacious! George St. John had found the key to his little wife's heart!

THE URAN UTAN.

In a recent work by Mr. E. T. Thompson, there is an amusing illustration of the faculty of imitation displayed by the uran utan. An uran utan brought up by Pere Carbasson became so fond of him, that, wherever he went, it always seemed desirous of accompanying him. Whenever, therefore, he had to perform the service of his church, he was under the necessity of shutting it up in a room. Once, however, the animal escaped, and followed the father to the church, where, silently mounting the sounding board above the pulpit, he lay perfectly still till the sermon commenced. He then crept to the edge, and overlooking the preacher, imitated all his gestures in so grotesque a manner that the whole congregation were unavoidably urged to laugh. The father, surprised and confounded at this ill-timed levity, severely rebuked their inattention. The reproof failed in its effect, the congregation still laughed, and the preacher, in the warmth of his zeal, redoubled his vociferations and actions. These the uran imitated so exactly that the congregation could no longer restrain themselves, and burst out in loud and continued laughter. The father was at last made acquainted with what was going on above his head, and the uran was speedily marched out of the church, with his countenance very expressive of insulted innocence.

No one can read the following anecdote of an uran, in the possession of Mr. Copts, without allowing him a large amount of reasoning power. He was passionately fond of oranges, and Mr. Copts gave him the half of one, laying the other half aside upon the upper shelf of a press out of his sight and reach. Some time after, being reclined on a couch with his eyes closed, he noticed the uran prowling about the room, and showing that, notwithstanding his apparent inattention, the position of the orange had been narrowly watched. Anxious to see the result, Mr. Copts continued quiet, and feigned sleep. The uran cautiously approached the sofa, examined as far as he could into the somnolency of his master, then, having satisfied himself on that point, he mounted quietly, and expeditiously finished the orange, carefully concealed the peel in the grate among some paper shavings, and having again examined Mr. Copts, who still feigned sleep, Master Uran retired chuckling to his couch.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

YOUNG couples, if they are are wise, will not devote their whole honeymoon to merely amusing and caressing each other. Let them remember the pastry-cook, who, when his apprentices first came, always gave them a surfeit of pies to insure their subsequent indifference.

JUPITER made a wound upon his head to let Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, find her way out, and ever since many mortals have thought it necessary to scratch their heads to enable a wise idea to escape.

LIFE is adjusted to the wants of the stronger sex. There are many torrents to be crossed in its journey, but their stepping-stones are measured by the stride of man, not of woman.

THE simplest things turn out to be unfathomable mysteries; the most mysterious appearances prove to be the most commonplace objects in disguise.

DO your duty, however dangerous. Death comes to all, and the world does not need your bodily presence so much as it does your moral heroism.

BECAUSE you can't get all you want, don't neglect what you can get. Squeeze out of the world all the juice there is in it.

THE world is in a state of bankruptcy; the world owes the world more than the world can pay, and ought to go into chancery and be sold.

OUR tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts.

SOMEBODY says that a pun has nothing in it. No more has soda-water; its attraction consists in its effervescence and volatility.

IF a fellow has an ugly club foot and a handsome wooden one, what is he to do when told to put his best foot forward?

PERHAPS moles were originally men, and became what they are from continually burrowing under ground, as many men do in our day.

A LADY who has lost all her teeth on one side, should take care not to laugh out of the wrong side of her mouth.

WHEN annoyed half to death by an everlasting talker, we scarcely know which is the worse, a footpad or a tonguepad.

PEOPLE have so often picked crows with each other that it seems strange there is a feathered raven left in the woods.

THE best way of raising money is by the lever of industry. The griping miser raises his by screw-power.

A MAN'S wife often gives him all the moral strength he has. She is at once his rib and his backbone.

DO not wait supinely for opportunity to come to you, but go and seek her in the highways and hedges.

SEEM as you are. When you are simply comfortable don't pretend to be tremendously happy.

AN old maid sometimes bites her lips in rage at finding that nobody wants to bite them in love.

THOSE blockheads who are always itching to write should be scratched with thorn and briar bushes.

THE book of a growling, snarling, snapping author may very properly be dog's-eared.

LITTLE squalls don't upset the lover's boat; they drive it all the faster to port.

A SMART young woman can judge by a kiss of the quality of her lover's liquor.

HOPE, the last resource of the miserable, comes to all but the damned and the seasick.

THE beautiful is as useful as the useful; perhaps more so.

THERE is no fear that a man of skull can't scull himself over the sea of life.

THE strongest words are generally the oftenest broken."

CURRENT ITEMS.

A GENTLEMAN living in Harlem was awakened one night recently by a noise below stairs, and on going down, with a lamp in one hand and a revolver in the other, he heard a scuffling in the kitchen, which sent a chill through his veins; and in endeavoring to open the kitchen door he dropped the lamp which was at once extinguished. The noise in the kitchen instantly ceased also. After a time the watcher opened the kitchen door cautiously, when something sprang past him. He fired. A yell followed. He struck a light and found that he had shot a large dog belonging to the brother of his servant girl, that she had shut up in the kitchen to keep over night for its owner. Of course the whole family was aroused by the report of the revolver and the howls of the dog, and the poor man had rather a disconsolate time of it, especially when the servant girl gave him warning that she should "quit" at daylight, and that her brother would sue him for the value of the dog, which would be fifty dollars at the least, and perhaps a great deal more.

OVER a dozen grizzly bears are said to have been killed of late in one county in Kanzas in the course of a week. The monsters seem to have been either unusually bold, or else somewhat out of their reckoning, as they came much nearer the haunts of civilization than is their custom, and showed fight whenever attacked; but of course powder and ball were too much for them. One injudicious sportsman got into a tight place, and barely saved his bacon by climbing a tree, with a grizzly ardently stretching its paws up to embrace his heels, which affectionate intention was frustrated by a rifle ball in the brain.

A WELL-DRESSED, though rude fellow, annoyed a lady in Broadway the other afternoon by persistently walking by her side, as though he were in company with her. She stopped several times, to get rid of him, but he also stopped; and then went on when she advanced; until, to get rid of him, she appealed to a couple of gentlemen, who, seeing at a glance how matters stood, told her to pass on, which she hastily did, and then they "restrained" the ill-mannered fellow "of his liberty," in such a forcible way that it was of but little use to him when he regained it—his eyes having been closed-up by several well-directed applications.

A LETTER lately received from Mexico states that the people of that ill-fated country have conceived the most bitter hatred to the French, whom they put to death on every possible occasion. They waylay them in unfrequented thoroughfares, haunt their steps when they go in troops from place to place, and cut off every straggler that exposes himself to their swoop. Bands of Mexicans, called "exterminators," are being formed, who swear to give themselves no rest as long as an invader remains on their soil. If this be so, the French will have rather a lively time of it.

A GENTLEMAN writing from Vienna says the prevailing opinion there at the date of his letter was that there would be a war between Russia on the one hand and France and England on the other, in regard to the Polish difficulties; and that it was the determination of Austria to join with the Western powers, in such an event, against the Czar. The chances are, however, greatly in favor of the Czar's avoiding such a calamity, as Russian diplomacy is full of resources, and France has all she can attend to already on hand.

As an officer of the United States Army was lately taking a number of deserters to Governor's Island, one of them leaped from the boat into the water, and struck out for the Long Island shore. He was pursued as rapidly as possible, but his strength gave out before the boat got within helping distance of him, and he was drowned. Hereafter deserters will be so secured while being taken to Governor's Island as to prevent such catastrophes.

THE Camanche Indians are reported to be on the war path again in Western Texas, the cut-throats thinking this a good time to gratify their revenge upon the whites—the women and children of the settlers being in many cases left without protection, as their husbands, sons and brothers have generally been forced into the rebel ranks, or have quit their homes to avoid such an odious fate.

A PICKPOCKET attempted to rob a lady who was riding in an omnibus in Broadway, but a gentleman who was sitting opposite saw what the rogue was about, and just as he was transferring the lady's purse to his pocket, he gave him a tremendous blow between the eyes which stunned him, and then calling for a policeman, he gave the rascal in charge and returned the lady her purse.

A SAIL-BOAT, containing a number of boys, was run down by a schooner, in the East river, one afternoon lately, and two of the boys were drowned. The others were rescued by persons on board the schooner, who leaped into the water for that purpose.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 25.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

CONSTANTINE AND HIS SONS.

The manner in which the Emperor Constantine "confessed his Saviour before men," and connected himself publicly with the Church of Christ, is a historic event worthy alike of the attention of the philosopher and of the Christian. The last years of Constantine's life were embittered by as heavy griefs as ever crushed the heart of man. His first conversion to Christianity was intellectual only; a full conviction that the system was from God. Sorrow taught him his own personal need of a Saviour. He was now 64 years of age. Rapidly increasing infirmities convinced him that he must soon pass from earth to the final judgment. He had selected Bizantium as his capital, and the city took from him the name of Constantinople.

Deeply depressed in spirits and sinking beneath his maladies, he retired for his health to some warm springs on the other side of the straits in Asia. Death was slowly but steadily approaching. He spent hours in the church, with prayers and tears and deep searchings of soul, anxiously seeking preparation to meet his God. Having obtained, as he belived, the assurance that his sins were forgiven, and that he had obtained acceptance of his Heavenly father, he prepared to make a public profession of his faith in Christ. While desiring no ostentatious display, it was his wish to acknowledge, before the whole world, that he was a penitent sinner trusting for forgiveness in an atoning Saviour.

For this purpose he went to *one of his palaces near the city of Nicomedia. There he assembled all the bishops of the neighboring churches*, and in the presence of a vast assemblage, kneeling at the altar, received the rite of baptism, and then partook of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. From this time until his death, which occurred soon after, he seemed to live the life of a sincere and devout follower of the Redeemer. Eusebius says that Constantine, on receiving baptism, declared to his friends his determination to govern himself, in the minutest particulars, by "God's worthy laws of life." He was true to this his covenant vow.

How singular and how touching are these triumphs of Christianity. The poor benighted slave, in his cheerless hut, bleeding, dying beneath the lash, finds in the religion of Jesus alone support. The martyr in his dungeon, thus sustained, with pallid lips sings hallelujahs. The Emperor Constantine, robed in the purple of universal empire, in the gorgeous palace of Nicomedia, surrounded with all the pomp and splendor of an Oriental monarch, finds his heart yearning for those consolations which the religion of Christ alone can give. He bows his head receiving the waters of baptism. The sacramental bread and wine he receives devoutly, tearfully, and with dying breath breathes the prayer, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

A few centuries pass away and there is another monarch, Charles V., whose sceptre rules almost the world. Weary of life he seeks the solitary vale of Estramadura. There, in the cloisters of St. Justus, he weeps over his sin, seeks forgiveness in an atoning Saviour, announces to the whole wide world his penitence and his trust in Jesus. And thus the regal mind, which had stood untottering beneath the cares of universal empire, bows in humblest submission to that religion which can alone meet the yearnings of the human soul.

Centuries roll on and again there is another monarch whose fame fills the world. Neither Charles V. nor the Cæsars swayed a sceptre equal to that of Napoleon. Contemplate the once mighty emperor, as through the long agony of St. Helena he sinks into the grave. There lies the dying monarch upon his miserable pallet at Longwood. Upon that imperial brow the baptismal drops have fallen. That eagle eye is dimmed with tears, as with penitence, confession and fervid prayer he receives the emblems of that body which was broken and that blood which was shed for our sins. And then peaceful, trusting that all his sins are forgiven, he falls asleep.

How signal are these triumphs of Christianity! triumphs which fill the pages of history and biography. The emperor Constantine was never ashamed of his religion. He became practically an earnest preacher of the gospel, issuing many appeals to his subjects entreating them to abandon sin in all its forms, and to accept Christ as their Saviour.

Upon the death of Constantine, the empire of the world was divided between his three sons. Constantine the eldest, with a slight recognition of superiority, took charge of the central portion of the empire, establishing himself at Constantinople as his capital. He was a man of dissolute habits and luxurious tastes, devoted entirely to self-indulgence, and the only object of his reign was the promotion of his own grandeur and pleasure. Most of the vast Asiatic realms, spreading east of the Hellespont, were assigned to Constantius. Constans, the youngest, took Italy and the western provinces as his portion of the imperial estate. All these young men were alike unworthy of their Christian sire. Accustomed to boundless wealth, and to the haughtiness which limitless power engenders, they were intolerable oppressors of the nations. The palace is proverbially one of the worst places in the world in which to bring up a family of boys. These three dissipated spendthrift lads, thus entrusted with the sceptre of power, were of the several ages of twenty-one, twenty, and seventeen years.

Constantine, their father, was truly a great man, possessed of wonderful executive power. He had been able to hold in check all the fierce nations crowding upon the frontiers of the empire. But his death was the signal for the bugle peals and the unfurled banners of battle. On all sides there was the rush of armed hordes upon the dismembered and weakened empire. Persia, under the leadership of the renowned Sapor, uttered aloud the cry of defiance, and set her armies in motion. Constantius, who was reveling in his palace, was alarmed, and with great reluctance was compelled to lay aside his silken robes, and abandon his luxurious couches for the hardships of the camp on the plains of Mesopotamia. A series of fiercest battles swept these plains, as the Persian cohorts and the Roman legions struggled with desperation on the bloody fields.

While this war was raging, engrossing all the energies and exhausting the resources of Constantius, the elder brother, Constantine, was plotting to overthrow his younger brother Constans, the boy emperor, and seize his realms. Secretly he matured his plans, and then, with an immense army, burst suddenly through the Julian Alps, and overran the province of Venetia in Italy. Constans, though but a boy of seventeen, was not deficient in spirit. He had able generals. With their aid he lured his brother into an ambuscade, killed him, annihilated his army, and brought all of the dominions of Constantine under his own sway. Thus Constans became undisputed sovereign of two-thirds of the Roman empire.

One of his generals, Magnentius, despising his youth, conspired against him. On the occasion of a feast in the city of Autun, renowned subsequently as the seat of the bishopric of Talleyrand, Magnentius assumed the imperial purple, and was greeted by the soldiery with the loudest acclaim. The troops took enthusiastically the oath of fidelity, waved wildly their banners, and clashed their weapons. Constans, who was on a hunting excursion in a neighboring forest, heard, at the same moment, of the conspiracy, and of the defection of his guard, which left him utterly powerless. Putting spurs to his horse he endeavored to reach the sea shore. He was overtaken at the foot of the Pyrenees and put to death. All the provinces which had been under Constantine and Constans, recognized Magnentius. Constantius and Magnentius, the two rival emperors, now strove to crush each other.

* * *

MILLIONS MISAPPLIED—A MISERABLE MILLIONAIRE.

Men of vast wealth, who employ it as if they regarded themselves as the stewards and almoners of Providence, charged with the grand duty of making the so-called "root of all evil" the instrument of all possible good, are probably among the happiest of mankind. On the other hand, the miserly millionaire, whose sole desire is to accumulate riches, and with whom possession, without reference to useful and kindly distribution, is the ruling passion of life, must be a more unhappy wretch than any Lazarus that ever grovelled for crumbs beneath the table of a voluptuary.

Of the truth of this last position we will give a signal illustration. The exiled Duke of Brunswick, now residing in Paris, is the owner of the most valuable private collection of diamonds in the world. *His gems, of which he recently published a catalogue comprising two hundred and sixty-eight quarto pages, are estimated to be worth $2,250,000!* Sparklers from the turbans of Eastern Nawabs, the crowns of emperors and archdukes, and the caskets of queens (including a brilliant that once adorned the hand of Mary Stuart, and two gems once pendant from the ears of Marie Antoinette), are among the Duke's treasures. But he is nevertheless a forlorn wretch. He lives in a house which resembles a jail rather than a palace—in fact, it *is* a jail, and he its prisoner. Though he has expended immense sums in rendering it fire-proof and burglar-proof, he fears to leave it for a single night lest it be consumed or rifled. Judge of the horrors he suffers in his Cave of Aladdin, by the means he has taken to make it invulnerable. We copy from a Scotch paper a sketch of its defences and its offensive armament:

> "It is surrounded by a lofty, thick wall, on the top of which is a *chevaux de frise*, so arranged that, when a strange hand is laid on one of the spikes, a bell immediately begins ringing. This defence cost the Duke no less than £2000 ($10,000) in being made, owing to its peculiar nature. The diamonds are kept in a safe let into the wall, and the Duke's bed stands before it, so that no thief can break in without waking or murdering him. On the other hand, he can enjoy the sight of all his treasures without leaving his bed. Were the safe to be broken open forcibly, four guns would be discharged, and kill the burglar on the spot, and with the discharge of the guns is connected the ringing of an alarm bell in every room to arouse the household. The Duke's bed-room has only one small window; the bolt and lock on his door are of the stoutest iron, and can only be opened by a man who knows the secret. A case, containing twelve loaded revolvers, stands by the side of the bed."

What rational day-laborer would exchange places with this Diamond Duke, if obliged to inherit his terrors with his treasures! His unhappy highness is at present negotiating for an increase of misery in the shape of two additional jewels—one valued at $175,000 and the other at $485,000! The interest of the money thus locked up in a parcel of shimmering trash, of no more use than so many bits of glass, would feed and clothe two thousand poor people. Only think of it! two thousand of the fellow-beings of this knave of diamonds are now famishing in Paris for lack of the means of subsistence which lies dead in his useless gew-gaws. It is easier for *two* camels to go through the eye of a needle than for *some* rich men to reach Heaven.

* * *

NAPOLEON'S AMERICAN PROVINCE AND DESIGNS.

The most dangerous and powerful of living despots, Napoleon the Usurper, has predicted the overthrow of this great Republic, and will leave nothing undone that he *dare* do to bring about the fulfilment of his prophecy. He intends that Mexico henceforth shall be a fief of France, and will use it as the fulcrum of the lever with which he hopes one day to overturn the Government of the United States. His violent seizure of Mexico, an act as atrocious as the subjugation of Poland and its partition between Russia, Austria and Prussia, proves that he is prepared to trample upon Public Law, whenever and wherever he can safely do so, for the furtherance of his own ambitious purposes. Whether he will attempt any direct interference with our domestic affairs, at present, may be questionable; but that he intends to make his new conquest a thorn in the side of our government there can be no doubt whatever. Napoleon has a cat-like persistency in watching and waiting. Mexico is his meal-tub, and he proposes, when a suitable opportunity offers, to spring out of it with talons unsheathed and teeth displayed. Before long it may become a question whether he can be allowed to crouch in that convenient lurking place with safety to the interests of the Great Republic. As soon as the Rebellion is off our hands, this matter will require the earnest attention of our statesmen.

THE GAME OF STOCKS—FORTUNES MADE AND LOST.

This exciting game was never more desperately played than during the last twelve months. The perturbations of Wall street have been tremendous. Almost fabulous fortunes have been acquired in the space of a few weeks, and in some instances in a few days; and, on the other hand, the life-time savings of hundreds of industrious men, drawn by such examples into the vortex of speculation, have disappeared as suddenly as snowflakes that fall into the sea. The mutations in some descriptions of stocks have been almost unparalleled. The shares of a certain company, not long ago, ran up sixty per cent. in the course of a few days, and it is within our knowledge that one man, who two years ago could not have raised eight hundred dollars to save him from perdition, realized by his dealings in this scrip alone, five hundred thousand dollars! An individual, who was only a short time ago a hand on board a bay steamboat, has found his Ophir in Wall street. He is to-day a millionaire, directs the operations of banks, and exercises a controlling influence over at least one important railroad. Incredible as this may seem, it is literally true. Writers for the press are rarely favorites of fortune. Should there be a shower of gold, the place to look for *them* would be between the drops; but even one of these chanced to be in the right place, at the right time, during a recent auriferous downfall in Wall street. He was the financial reporter of a daily paper—a gentleman who worked hard, and thought his labors fairly compensated with a salary of twenty dollars a week. Being an economical person, he contrived to save out of his moderate earnings a few hundred dollars. With this small sum he began to "operate." His sources of information were of the right kind, his head clear and cool, his courage dauntless. Nobody save the broker he employed was aware of what he was doing, for he was a wise man and kept his own counsel. He moved about the "street" a "mere reporter," with a vigilant eye to his duties, it was supposed, but apparently nothing more. By and by, however, he threw up his situation, and with two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in his pocket, retired to Europe, to live like an aristocrat!

But there is another side to the picture, of which the world at large sees and knows very little. For every speculator that has been enriched by the late rocket-like rise in "fancy stocks," fifty have been beggared. If one could look into all the households that have been hopelessly impoverished through the stock gambling epidemic, which for the past year has prevailed among all classes and conditions, such spirts of success as we have referred to would seem a very meagre dividend upon the general investment.

The gold-dealing mania—we call it a mania, for any person witnessing the excitement of the crowd engaged in buying and selling the commodity, without knowing the cause of their wild looks and vehement [illegible]iculations, would deem them madmen—has [illegible]ed thousands, and will yet ruin thousands more. Advice, we presume, would be thrown away upon those who are already fairly awhirl in the Wall street maelstrom; but to those who are hovering about the margin of the vortex, uncertain whether to tempt its perils or not, we say most emphatically—avoid an abyss which engulfs at least seventy-five per cent. of all the Jasons who embark on it in search of the Golden Fleece.

* * *

HOW TO WIPE OUT THE REBEL PRIVATEERS.

The rebels are having royal sport at the merry pastime of privateering. It seems to be a species of recreation in which the risk is infinitesimal, the fun immense. A prettier illustration, on an extended scale, of the fable of the Boys and the Frogs, Æsop himself could not have desired. The Southern Sea Rovers are the boys; our peaceful, unresisting merchantmen the frogs; and, save that the pelting is rather heavier on the ocean than it is described as having been in the frog-marsh, the parallel is perfect.

A remedy for the mischief has been proposed—the simple and easy device of granting letters-of-marque to honest Union citizens, and permitting them to sweep from the sea the freebooters who now set our government at defiance. It is just as certain as that dawn will follow darkness that by this means every rebel privateer afloat could be taken, or sunk, or driven from the great Highway of Nations within six months. Why does not the Executive make the experiment? Nothing is to be hoped from the Navy Department. Its head is a "dawdler"—just fit for the routine of blockading or any mere chalk-line service, but without the resources necessary to cope with any difficulty or danger outside of the mill-horse track of ordinary duty. Issue privateering licenses to competent men in our noble merchant service, and they will soon wipe out the stain that now rests upon our Naval Escutcheon in consequence of the impunity with which Jeff. Davis's buccaneers have been permitted to establish a reign of terror on the high seas. Will not the government, in mercy to our commerce, *put out the job* that the Hon. Gideon Welles has proved himself incompetent to perform?

* * *

PEOPLE AND PLACES.

We wonder how many of the people who are now rusticating in the country according to prescribed custom, are longing for the day and hour when fashion graciously permits them to return again to the city. We wonder how many think with longing of the cool, large, airy rooms at home, now darkened and desolate, as they look around the little closetless boxes of some farm-house or hotel where they are at present self-exiled. For one that is contented, sure we are there are nine who are quite thoroughly sick of it. Rare are the instances in which these temporary summer arrangements answer the expectations of those who make them. Once in a century congenial spirits meeting in this way, may make the time pass all too quickly. *Then* one wishes that under one roof might forever be gathered those choice spirits, and that the wine of life might always be as exhilarating as now. But we all know this is not to be. Corroding cares and disappointments and sorrow are more frequently the rule than the exception in human experience; and if one catches himself laughing, the sigh of remembrance soon quenches it. There exists, however, a large class of our fellow-creatures who never sigh save when their purses, or their larder, or both, run low. Destitute of heart, the physical only has power over them; such look upon their more susceptible fellow-creatures with an impatient wonder. The idea of fretting about *anything*, with enough to eat and drink and wear! It is disgusting and ridiculous! If such lose a friend, they clap a comfortable tombstone on him and feel just as they did before. But let them take one cent less a day in their business than usual—*that* appeals to them. *That* they can comprehend. To consort with such, either in city or country, is an infliction difficult to bear; and, truth to tell, when *heart* is the test of acquaintanceship, there is little wheat to be winnowed from the chaff.

FANNY FERN.

A TRIBUTE TO THE HEROIC DEAD.

We publish below the touching and eloquent tribute to the memory of his classmates, pronounced by Mr. William Everett at the recent dinner of the Alumni of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. E. is the youngest son of the Hon. Edward Everett, and appears to inherit the literary taste and genius of his father. He was graduated from Harvard with distinction about four years ago, and immediately afterwards went to England and entered Cambridge University as a student. The public journals, from time to time, chronicled his success there as scholar and orator. He was the winner of a warmly-contested prize for declamation, and also enjoyed the signal triumph of obtaining a Fellowship. While in England he embraced every opportunity that presented itself to expose and refute the sophistries of the Secessionists, and particularly distinguished himself as a fervent champion of the Union cause at the sessions of the Debating Society, which embraced the most active and gifted minds of the University. After reaping a full harvest of academic laurels, Mr. Everett returned to this country in June last.

Mr. William Everett's Remarks.

Dr. Holmes said:—

> "We have listened to the music of one voice whose accents are so much a part of every high festival of our Alma Mater that without it our hall would be a cathedral without its organ. To know if its qualities are hereditary, we must pass to one of our younger graduates who comes to us crowned with the honors of our ancient namesake—The University of Cambridge in England—Mr. William Everett of the Class of 1859."

Mr. William Everett said:—

There is an old story of two boys who went together to a well to draw water—one of them contrived to drop and break his pitcher—"My eye!" said the other, "won't your mother give you a whopping!" "Oh, no," replied the urchin, "I've got a grandmother at home!" Four years ago, Mr. President, when I ran away from our Mother's hands, feeling very like a naughty boy, I thought the best way of escaping disgrace was to run to our grandmother across the water, and she treated me so well, patted me on the back so kindly, and gave me such nice sugarplums, that I have ventured back boldly, unterrified by any prospect of censure from our truly Alma Mater. But, sir, it is not of myself I have to speak here. There is one association, which in this hall, is dearer to all of us, even than our family ties, the only distinction, sir, as you have so well told us, admitted in our literary republic—the association and distinction of our class. We have heard much to-day of the gallant sons of Harvard who have fallen in defence of our beloved country, but no class has yet put forward any one to tell the story of his own peculiar comrades—those whom one or another of our annual bands of brothers has to lament with special tenderness. If you will allow me to keep you, sir, a few moments, I should wish to tell you the plain story of the dead of 1859. Our class during its course in college prided itself on a peculiar unity, a peculiar regard among its members. Of our own accord we gave up the rival societies which sometimes seem to cause dissension in a class; and after sending to the war a greater number than any other year, we feel a peculiar reverence for the memory of our fallen brothers. Let me ask your attention to the story of 1859.

You have none of you forgotten the terrible fighting around Richmond a year ago—when our gallant commander felt that the safety and honor of his army called for a retreat from the rebel works, and slowly, terribly, like the lion at bay, inch by inch, step by step, that undaunted host yielded their position, every day driving back and trampling down the fiery onset of their invaders. In the very beginning of that terrible fighting, there was found at the head of one of our brave Massachusetts regiments a son of '59; and I appeal to all here who remember him, to his own class, to the class of '58 with whom he was for a time associated, if, amid all the destruction the rebel bullets have scattered, there has perished a more gallant presence, a truer heart, a more undaunted courage, than that of Henry Jackson How.

Again, a few weeks after, when our gallant Massachusetts leader, to whose recent exploits, Mr. President, you have so well alluded, was forced to hurry back along the Shenandoah,—on that terrible ninth of August, that *dreadful day of Cedar Mountain, another of our brethren, a name ever associated with the welfare and honor of* Harvard, was struck down by a too accurate shot while reconnoitering the rebel position, and '59 lost for ever the lofty intellect, the flashing eloquence, the ardent and indomitable energy of Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff.

Again, when the foe grown insolent by success had pushed his forces into the very heart of our country— * * —on that terrible day of Antietam, when the carnage raged for hours and over miles till the invader was sent baffled to his devastated home, another noble heart burst in the conflict, nor did the God of battles take to himself a purer soul, a more unselfish patriotism, a more spotless life, than with George Wellington Batchelder.

But there are other scenes and other fates in the last year's history. The arbiter of war indeed sits enthroned on the nation's capitol, clad in panoply of steel. Crushing with his left hand the defences of Charleston, beating back with his right the invaders of Pennsylvania—trampling with one foot the ramparts of Vicksburg, and spurning with the other the invaders of Tennessee—

"His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;—
They also serve who only stand and wait."

There is a gallant band whom we have just welcomed home with well earned acclamations from their cares and labors. Exposed at Kinston and Goldsborough to some of the severest encounters of the war, they have *stood and waited* in the malarious swamps of Newbern, under the attacks of a deadlier engine of destruction than rifle or cannon—they have left behind them many a chosen son of New England, and filled many a house with mourning. But of all that fell victims to that deadly atmosphere our deepest and bitterest tears gush forth for the tender heart, the brilliant fancy, the far-searching mind, stored with all classic and romantic treasures, the lofty ambition, the unflinching love of country of Francis Custis Hopkinson.

And now a sad rumor comes to us, that in these last days of Gettysburg, whose victorious results have filled the land with thanksgiving, yet another has been taken from us. The mournful report—O that it may prove false!—is among us, that one of the bravest and noblest of our number has fallen, in the very act of cheering his troops to battle, and that we are to mourn for the valiant and honored brother, whose very name was the presage of victory, the high-minded and gallant Strong Vincent.

Such, sir, is the record of '59. She does not fear comparison with the noblest of her sisters. She does not shrink from exhibiting her list of martyrs—the brightest on that roll. And, sir, in thanking you for the too flattering manner in which you have called upon me, I thank you also for the opportunity you have given me of bearing public testimony in this hall to the patriotism and sufferings of my honored and beloved class.

* * *

A MISER'S IRON WILL.

As two travellers were passing on foot through a sequestered valley, their way led them through a lonely little churchyard, upon one of the tombstones of which they deciphered the following singular inscription:

"HERE LIES THE SOUL OF ONE WHOSE NAME SHALL PERISH."

"What a queer old epitaph!" exclaimed one of the travellers; "the *soul* of one, forsooth!—how could the soul of a man be imprisoned in a sepulchre?"

"Ridiculous!" rejoined the other, who was a man of few words but much sagacity; and they proceeded on their journey in silence, to the next town.

But the sagacious man thought that he discerned in the words chiselled on the old marble slab something more than their first sense expressed. Returning privately to the lonely church-yard, then, he removed the slab from its place, and found buried underneath it a heavy iron casket, which, on being opened, proved to be full of gold pieces. On the inside of the lid of the casket were inscribed the following words:

"TO HIM WHO HAS WIT ENOUGH TO INTERPRET THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORDS GRAVEN UPON THE TOMBSTONE I BEQUEATH THIS TREASURE. MAY HE MAKE A BETTER USE OF IT THAN I DID!"

"Ha! ha!" laughed the sagacious traveller, "if not your son, I am at least your heir. Never mind the name, old boy. Let it perish!"

And he went on his way, rejoicing.

* * *

—A *good* discourse is that from which one can take nothing without taking the life.

NEW YORK AND BOSTON.

New York has a funny devil-may-care fashion of doing whatever is convenient in its sight without regard to its neighbors. For instance: straw mattresses and other refuse are set burning in the midst of a block of respectable houses, stifling its occupants with hot odors, (because No. 142 is too lazy to dispose of them otherwise;) spite of window-sashes slammed hastily down, or protruding heads thrust therefrom, with disgusted noses. Even the small breathing places called "parks," which New York allows its children to play in, are defiled by this reprehensible practice. Often in walking through them, one's pleasure for the time is quite spoiled by bonfires of dead leaves and branches, whose smoke the poor children are compelled to endure or to leave. Imagine old Boston permitting its Paradisiacal Common, so scrupulously kept, to be defiled either in this way, or by multitudes of worms festooned from its trees. Imagine old Boston allowing its milk carried about in great universal tins, which are uncovered and dipped into five hundred and fifty-nine times before any one's particular family quantum is produced. Imagine neat, thrifty Boston allowing noxious barrels of kitchen refuse to stand under its parlor windows day by day. Imagine its streets swept without first being sprinkled, and with brooms worn to the "hub" wielded by the dawdling hands of sexagenarians at the rate of two revolutions in as many hours, parenthesised with multitudinous scratchings of heads and hitching up of waistbands. Imagine its permitting building-material to encumber a crowded thoroughfare for months, at the pleasure of the builder to proceed, or to stop, at any self-elected intervals. Boston has its faults, but one can throw up his window there without danger of "throwing up" ——— anything else! As to its women, they are more addicted to buying histories, geographies and essays, than breast-pins and bracelets. Their shawls may not be worn with a New York grace, but meantime they are never guilty of the bad taste of wearing dress hats in doubtful weather, or trailing rich dresses through omnibusses, street cars, or ferry-boats. They may be ignorant of the existence of the "very last perfume;" but if the latest American, or English, or French book is canvassed in their presence, they are not obliged to hold their tongues for want of knowledge on the subject. They may have but one trunk at a watering-place, where a New York woman has six; but in that trunk you'll be certain to find something substantial to read. The intellectual beauty of their faces, it is true, may be purchased at too dear a price; for one is often pained there at the narrow chest and general fragility of its women. In the millennium, we trust, women may possess brains, married to round, healthful, vigorous bodies. Till then—we seem to be obliged to look, either upon a healthy fool, or an early grave.

FANNY FERN.

* * *

A PLEA FOR EARLY MARRIAGES.

In Camp at Fort McHenry, July 23, 1863.

Mr. Bonner—*Sir*:—I cannot "for the life of me" understand why you are so emphatic in your remarks condemning early engagements or marriages. Let me state my own case: My mother died when I was about eleven years old, and after that I was left almost to myself. I gradually got into bad company and acquired bad habits, until I was nearly seventeen, at which time I was quite dissipated—out nearly every night till after midnight, and then often coming home in such a condition that it was with difficulty I could find the key-hole. About this time I became acquainted with a young lady with whom I thought I was desperately in love. I visited her steadily for some months (thus going home sober and keeping out of bad company), until I proposed and was accepted. Upon reflection, I began to be fearful that we had made a mistake, but I gradually got over that, and after being engaged for three years we married. We are now, each of us, twenty-five years old, and I do not believe that we have ever regretted the step we took. I love my wife with an intensity that is only equalled by her love for me; and she, being a religious woman, has kept me from vice and sin as much as it is possible for one erring mortal to guide the steps of another. Whatever I am, whatever I hope to be, I owe, through God, to her gentle influence, and I love to write this about her—I could fill a volume with her excellence, but what I have already said sufficiently indicates my position, viz.: that an early marriage is not always followed by regret.

Yours respectfully, MILITIAMAN.

Our correspondent's case is a highly interesting one, and appeals strongly to the best sympathies of the heart; but it does not disprove the general fact that it is indiscreet for boys of seventeen to "engage" themselves, and that twenty is too early an age for young men in general to get married. If all boys of seventeen were *necessarily* dissipated, and if their falling in love and becoming engaged at that age and then marrying at twenty would be *sure* to change them into admirable husbands, that would of course settle the question in favor of such early engagements and early marriages. But as things are, (and fortunate as some early marriages may prove to be,) the only *safe rule* of action in these matters forbids, as a general thing, such early engagements and marriages as the case of "MILITIAMAN" furnishes; and by the time he has a son or daughter seventeen years old, he will be pretty certain to take this view of the question himself. He was so exceedingly fortunate as to secure perhaps the only woman in the world who would just meet and fulfill the needs of his case. He himself says that the success of the experiment is under God *wholly due to her*. Was it not then a terrible risk for her to run? Would "MILITIAMAN" consent that a daughter of his—a mere child of seventeen—should venture upon the fearful experiment of engaging herself in marriage to a "quite dissipated" boy only seventeen years old? If *he* would consent to such a step on the part of a daughter of his, we are pretty certain that the same admirable and sensible woman who under God proved his own salvation would interpose in behalf of her child.

* * *

—Some humbugs, especially those of a religious kind, possess a wonderful tenacity of life. Witness the Mormon humbug as an example. For a few years past it has been thought that Mormonism was dying out—"gradually running itself into the ground," as a member of Congress said last winter. But not a bit of it. Its proselytes are pouring in from Europe by hundreds, yea thousands. And they are a thrifty, well-to-do class, too, and not mere vagabonds, as one might naturally suppose they would be. As things now look, Mormonism may yet have a run something like that which Mahometanism had in its early ages, with this difference, however, that it will be propagated by the pen and not by the sword.

* * *

—The crops of the present season are again munificent. The soil has yielded a generous return to the husbandman, and the herds in a thousand valleys and the flocks on a thousand hills have multiplied and waxed fat on Nature's bountiful provant. The orchards, too, give liberal promise of golden fruitage. The whole land is teeming with plenty and smiling with prosperity. Take it all in all, this is a year to be remembered with feelings of unusual gratitude to the great Giver, who has so bountifully dispensed His blessings all over our loyal land.

* * *

—It is certainly much easier wholly to decline a passion, than to keep it within just bounds and measures; and that which few can moderate, almost anybody may prevent.

HUNTING.

BY ALICE CARY.

On the mountain, in the morning,
Over valleys bright and gay,
Now coming, and now going,
I've been hunting all the day.

I have seen the river winding
Its slow mist, fold in fold,
And the May-flag meekly binding
Her dim leaves all in gold.

I have seen the little bosoms
Of the larkspurs all aglow,
And the mullein with her blossoms
Like a turban on her brow.

The willow-flower has drifted
In sweetness to my lips,
And the lady-rose has lifted
To my hand her finger-tips.

I have seen the ivy twining
With the low and knotty grass,
And the long red berries shining
In the pleasant sassafras.

But lacking one thing only,
All the rest is incomplete—
The gladdest place is lonely,
And the sweetest is not sweet.

So, the flowery folk affronting
With my sad and selfish pain,
I've been all day a hunting,
A hunting all in vain.

* * *

SELF-MADE;
OR,
"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
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CHAPTER L.

CLAUDIA'S CITY HOME.

"How beautiful the mansion's throned
Behind its elm tree's screen,
With simple attic cornice crowned
All graceful and serene." ANON.

Just north of the Capitol-park, upon a gentle eminence, within its own well-shaded and well-cultivated grounds, stood a fine, old, family mansion, that had once been the temporary residence of George Washington.

The house was very large, with many spacious rooms and broad passages within, and many garden walks and trellissed arbors around it.

In front were so many evergreen trees and in the rear was so fine a conservatory of blooming flowers, that even in the depth of winter it seemed like summer there.

The house was so secluded within its many thick trees and high garden walls that the noise of the city never reached its inmates; though they were within five minutes' walk of the Capitol and ten minutes' drive of the President's mansion.

Judge Merlin had been very fortunate in securing for the season this delightful home, where he could be within easy reach of his official business, and at the same time enjoy the quiet so necessary to his temperament.

That winter he had been appointed one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, and it was very desirable to have so pleasant a dwelling place within such easy reach of the Capitol, where the court was held. At the head of this house his young daughter had been placed as its mistress. She had not yet appeared anywhere in public. She was reserving herself for two events: the arrival of her chaperone and the first evening reception of the President. Her presence in the city was not even certainly known beyond her own domestic circle; though a vague rumor, started no one knew by whom, was afloat to the effect that Miss Merlin, the young Maryland heiress and beauty, was expected to come out in Washington during the current season.

Meanwhile she remained in seclusion in her father's house.

It was to this delightful town house, so like the country in its isolation, that Ishmael Worth was invited.

It was just at sunrise on Tuesday morning that the old steamer Columbia, having Ishmael on board, landed at the Seventh Street wharf, and the young man, destined some future day to fill a high official position in the Federal government, took his humble carpet-bag in his hand and entered the Federal city.

Ah! many thousands had entered the National capital before him, and many more thousands would enter it after him, only to complain of it, to carp over it, to laugh at it, for its "magnificent distances," its unfinished buildings, its muddy streets and its mean dwellings.

But Ishmael entered within its boundaries with feelings of reverence and affection. It was the City of Washington, the sacred heart of the nation.

He had heard it called by shallow-brained and short-sighted people a sublime failure! It was a sublime idea, indeed, he thought, but no failure! Failure? Why what did those who called it so expect? Did they expect that the great capital of the great Republic should spring into full-grown existence as quickly as a hamlet around a railway station, or a village at a steamboat landing? Great ideas require long time for their complete embodiment. And those who sneered at Washington were as little capable of foreseeing its future, as the idlers about the steamboat wharf were of foretelling the fortunes of the modest-looking youth, in country clothes, who stood there gazing thoughtfully upon the city.

"Can you tell me the nearest way to Pennsylvania Avenue?" at length he asked of a bystander.

"Just set your face to the North and follow your nose for about a mile, and you'll fetch up to the broadest street as ever you see; and that 'ill be it," was the answer.

With this simple direction, Ishmael went on until he came to the avenue, which he recognized at once from the description.

The Capitol throned in majestic grandeur upon the top of its wooded hill at the eastern extremity of the avenue, and gleaming white in the rays of the morning sun, seeming to preside over the whole scene, next attracted Ishmael's admiration. As his way lay towards it, he had ample time to contemplate its imposing magnificence and beauty.

As he drew near it, however, he began to throw his eyes around the surrounding country in search of Judge Merlin's house. He soon identified it—a large old family mansion, standing in a thick grove of trees on a hill just north of the Capitol grounds. He turned to the left, ascended the hill, and soon found himself at the iron gate leading into the grounds.

Here his old acquaintance, Sam, being on duty as porter, admitted him, and, taking him by a winding gravel walk, that turned and twisted among groves and parterres, led him up to the house, and delivered him into the charge of a black footman, who was at that early hour engaged in opening the doors and windows.

He was the same Jim who used to wait on the table at Tanglewood.

"Good morning, Mr. Ishmael, sir," he said, advancing in a friendly and respectful manner, to receive the new arrival.

"The judge expected me this morning, Jim?" inquired Ishmael, when he had returned the greeting of the man.

"Oh, yes, sir; and ordered your room got ready for you. The family aint down yet, sir; but I can show you your room," said Jim, taking Ishmael's carpet bag from him, and leading the way up stairs.

They went up three flights of stairs, to a small front room in the third story, with one window, looking west.

Here Jim sat down the carpet bag, saying:

"It's rather high up, sir; but you see we are expecting Mrs. Middleton and all her family, and of course the best spare rooms has to be give up to the ladies. I think you will find everything you could wish for at hand, sir; but if there should be anything else wanted, you can ring, and one of the men servants will come up." And with this, Jim bowed and left the room.

Ishmael looked around upon his new domicile.

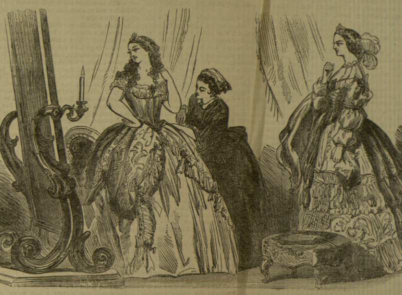
It was a very plain room, with simple maple furniture, neatly arranged; a brown woolen carpet on the floor; white dimity curtains at the window; and a small coal fire in the grate. Yet it was much better than Ishmael had been accustomed to at home, and besides, the elevated position of the room, and the outlook from the only window, compensated for all deficiencies.

Ishmael walked up to this window, put aside the dainty white curtain, and looked forth: the whole of the city of Washington, Georgetown, the windings of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, Analostian Island, and the undulating hills of the Virginia and Maryland shores, lay spread like a vast panorama before him.

As the thicket was a necessity to Judge Merlin's nature, so the widely extended prospect was a need of Ishmael's spirit; his eyes must travel when his feet could not.

Feeling perfectly satisfied with his quarters, Ishmael at last left the window and made his toilet, preparatory to meeting the judge and—Claudia!

"Oh, beating heart, be still! be still!" he said to himself, as the anticipation of that latter meeting, with all its disturbing influences, sent the blood rioting through his veins.



PREPARING FOR THE PRESID'T'S LEVEE.

Without being the very least dandyish, Ishmael was still fastidiously nice in his personal appointments; purity and refinement pervaded his presence.

He had completed his toilet, and was engaged in lightly brushing some lint from his black coat, when a knock at his door attracted his attention.

It was Jim, who had come to announce breakfast and show him the way to the morning room.

Down the three flights of stairs they went again, and across the central hall to a front room on the left that looked out upon the winter garden of evergreen trees. Crimson curtained and crimson carpeted, with a bright coal fire in the polished steel grate, and a glittering silver service on the white draped breakfast-table, this room had a very inviting aspect on this frosty December morning.

The judge stood with his back to the fire, and a damp newspaper open in his hand. Claudia was no where visible—a hasty glance around the room assured Ishmael that she had not yet entered it. Ishmael's movements were so noiseless, that his presence was not observed until he actually went up to the judge, and, bowing, accosted him with the words:

"I am here according to appointment, Judge Merlin; and hope I find you well."

"Ah! yes; good morning! how do you do, Ishmael?" said the judge, laying aside his paper and cordially shaking hands with the youth. "Punctual, I see! Had a pleasant journey?"

"Thank you, sir; very pleasant," returned Ishmael.

"Feel like setting to work this morning? There is quite an accumulation of correspondence groaning to be attended to."

"I am ready to enter upon my duties whenever you please, sir."

"All right," said the judge, touching a bell that presently summoned Jim to his presence.

"Let us have breakfast immediately. Where is Miss Merlin? Let her know that we are waiting for her."

"'Miss Merlin' is here, papa," said a rich voice at the door.

Ishmael's heart bounded and throbbed, and Claudia entered the breakfast-room.

Such a picture of almost oriental beauty, luxury and splendor as she looked! She wore a morning robe of rich crimson foulard silk, fastened up the front with garnet buttons, each a spark of fire. The dress was open at the throat and wrists, revealing glimpses of the delicate cambric collar and cuffs confined by the purest pearl studs. Her luxuriant hair was carried away from her snowy temples and drooped in long, rich, purplish, black ringlets from the back of her stately head. But her full, dark eyes and oval crimson cheeks and lips glowed with a fire too vivid for health as she advanced and gave her father the morning kiss.

"I am glad you have come, my dear! I have been waiting for you!" said the judge.

"You shall not have to do so another morning, papa," she answered.

"Here is Ishmael, Claudia," said her father, directing her attention to the youth, who had delicately withdrawn into the background; but who, at the mention of his own name, came forward to pay his respects to the heiress.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Worth," she said, extending her hand to him as he bowed before her; and then quickly detecting a passing shade of pain in his expressive face, she added, smiling:

"You know we must begin to call you Mr. Worth sometime, and there can be no better time than this, when you make your first appearance in the city and commence a new career in life."

"I had hoped always to be 'Ishmael' with my friends," he replied.

"'Times change and we change with them,' said one of the wisest of sages," smiled Claudia.

"And coffee and muffins grow cold by standing! which is more to the present purpose," laughed Judge Merlin, handing his daughter to her seat at the head of the table, taking his own at the foot, and pointing his guest to one at the side.

When all were seated, Claudia poured out the coffee and the breakfast commenced. But to the discredit of the judge's consistency, it might have been noticed that, after he had helped his companion to steak, waffles and other edibles, he resumed his newspaper; and, regardless that coffee and muffins grew cold by standing, recommenced reading the debates in Congress.

At length, when he finished reading and saw that his companions had finished eating, he swallowed his muffin in two bolts, sped his coffee in two draughts and started up from the table, exclaiming:

"Now then, Ishmael, if you're ready?"

Ishmael arose, bowed to Claudia, and turned to follow his employer.

The judge led him up stairs to a sort of office or study, immediately over the breakfast-room, having an outlook over the Capitol grounds, and fitted up with a few book-cases, writing-desks, and easy-chairs.

The judge drew a chair to the central table, which was covered with papers, and motioned to Ishmael to take another seat at the same table. And as soon as Ishmael obeyed, Judge Merlin began to initiate him in his new duties, which, in fact, were so much of the same description with those in which he had been engaged at Tanglewood, that he very soon understood and entered upon them.

The first few days of Ishmael's sojourn were very busy ones. There was a great arrearage of correspondence; and he worked diligently day and night until he had brought up all arrears to the current time.

When this was accomplished, and he had but two mails to attend to in one day, he found that five hours in the morning and five in the evening sufficed for the work, and left him ample leisure for the pursuit of his legal studies, and he devoted himself to them, both by diligent reading and by regular attendance upon the sessions of the circuit court, where he watched, listened and took notes, comparing the latter with the readings. Of course he could not do all this without reducing his labors to a perfect system, and he could not constantly adhere to this system without practising the severest self-denial. I tell you, young reader of this story, that in this Republic there is no "royal road" to fame and honor. The way is open to each and all of you, but it is steep and rugged, yes, and slippery; and you must toil and sweat and watch if you would reach the summit.

Would you know exactly how Ishmael managed this stage of his toilsome ascent? I will tell you. He arose at four o'clock those winter-mornings; dressed quickly and went into the judge's study, where he made the fire himself, because the servants would not be astir for hours; then he sat down with the pile of letters that had come by the night's mail; he looked over the judge's hints regarding them, and then went to work and answered letters or copied documents for four hours, or until the breakfast bell rung, when he joined Claudia and her father at table. After breakfast he attended the judge in his study; submitted to his inspection the morning's work; then took them to the post-office; posted them; brought back the letters that arrived by the morning's mail, and left them with the judge to be read. This would bring him to about eleven o'clock, when he went to the City-hall, to watch the proceedings of the circuit court, making careful notes and comparing them with his own private readings of law. He returned from the circuit court about two o'clock; spent the afternoon in answering the letters left for him by the judge; dined late with the family; took the second lot of letters to the post-office, and returned with those that came by the evening mail; gave them to the judge for examination, and then went up to his room to spend the evening in reading law and comparing notes. He allowed himself no recreation and but little rest. His soul was sustained by what Balzac calls the "The Divine patience of genius." And the more he was enabled to measure himself with other men, the more confidence he acquired in his own powers. This severe mental labor took away much of the pain of his "despised love." Ishmael was one to love strongly, ardently, constantly! But he was not one to drivel over a hopeless passion. He loved Claudia! how deeply, how purely, how faithfully, all his future life was destined to prove! And he knew that Claudia loved him; but that all the prejudices of her rank, her character and her education were warring in her bosom against this love! He knew that she appreciated his personal worth but scorned his social position! He felt that she had resolved never, under any circumstances whatever, to marry *him;* but he trusted in her honor, never to permit her, while loving *him*, to marry another! And in the meantime, years of toil would pass; he would achieve greatness; and when the obscurity of his origin should be lost in the light of his fame, *then* he would woo and win Miss Merlin!

Such were the young man's dreams, whenever in his busy, crowded, useful life he gave himself time to dream.

And meanwhile, what was the conduct of the heiress to her presumptuous lover? Coldly proud, but very respectful! For, mark you this—No one who was capable of appreciating Ishmael Worth, could possibly treat him otherwise than with respect.

CHAPTER LI.

HEIRESS AND BEAUTY.

'Tis hard upon the dawn, and yet
She comes not from the ball.
The night is cold and bleak and wet,
And the snow lies over all.
I praised her with her diamonds on!—
And as she went she smiled.
And yet I sighed when she was gone,
I sighed like any child. MEREDITH.

Meanwhile all Claudia Merlin's time was taken up with milliners, mantua-makers and jewellers. She was to make her first appearance in society at the President's first evening reception, which was to be held on Friday, the sixth of January. *It was now very near the New Year, and all her intervening time was occupied in preparations for the festivities that were to attend it.*

On the twenty-third of December, two days before Christmas, Mr. and Mrs. Middleton and all their family arrived. They came up by the "Columbia," and reached Judge Merlin's house early in the morning. Consequently, they were not fatigued, and the day of their arrival was a day of unalloyed pleasure and of family jubilee.

Ishmael took sympathetic part in all the rejoicings, and was caressed by Mr. and Mrs. Middleton and all their younger children as a sort of supplementary son and brother.

On Christmas Eve, also, Reuben Gray, Hannah and her children came to town in their wagon. Honest Reuben had brought a load of turkies for the Christmas market, and had "put up" at a plain, respectable inn, much frequented by the farmers, near the market-house; but in the course of the day he and his wife, leaving the children in the care of their faithful Sally, who had accompanied them in the character of nurse, called on Ishmael and brought him his trunk of wearing apparel.

The judge, in his hearty, old-fashioned, thoughtless hospitality, would have had Reuben and his family come and stop at his own house. But Reuben Gray, with all his simplicity, had the good sense firmly to decline this invitation and keep to his tavern.

"For you know, Hannah, my dear," he said to his wife, when they found themselves again at the "Plough," "we would bother the family more'n the judge reckoned on. What could they do with us? Where could they put us? As to axing of us in the drawing-room, or sitting of us down in the dining-room, with all his fine, fashionable friends, that wasn't to be thought on! And as to *you* being put into the kitchen, along of the servants, that *I* wouldn't allow! Now the judge, he didn't think of all these things; but I did; and I was right to decline the invitation, don't you think so?"

"Of course you were, Reuben, and if you hadn't declined it, I would, and that I tell you," answered Mrs. Gray.

"And so, Hannah, my dear, we will just keep our Christmas where we are! We won't deprive Ishmael of his grand Christmas dinner with his grand friends; but we will ax him to come over and go to the play-house with us and see the play, and then we'll all come back and have a nice supper all on us together. We'll have a roast turkey and mince-pie and egg-nogg and apple-toddy, my dear, and make a night of it, once in a way! What do you think?"

"I think that will be all very well, Reuben, so that you don't take too much of that same said egg-nogg and apple-toddy," replied Mrs. Gray.

"Now, Hannah, did you ever know me to do such a thing?" inquired Reuben, with an injured air.

"No, Reuben, I never did! But I think that a man that even so much as touches spiritable likkers is never safe until he is in his grave," said Mrs. Gray, solemnly.

"Where he can never get no more!" sighed Reuben; and as he had to attend the market to sell his turkeys that night, he left Hannah and went to put his horses to the wagon.

So fine a trade did Reuben drive with his fat turkeys that he came home at ten with an empty wagon and full pocket-book, and told Hannah that she might have a new black silk "gownd" and Sally should have a red calico "un," and as for the children, they should have an outfit from head to foot.

Christmas morning dawned gloriously. All the little Middletons were made happy by the fruit of the Christmas tree. In the many kind interchanges of gifts Ishmael was not entirely forgotten. Some loving heart had remembered him. Some skillful hand had worked for him. When he went up to his room after breakfast on Christmas morning, he saw upon his dressing-table a packet directed to himself. On opening it he found a fine pocket handkerchief neatly hemmed and marked, a pair of nice gloves, a pair of home-knit socks and a pair of embroidered slippers. Here were no useless fancy trumpery; all were useful articles; and in the old-fashioned, house-wife-ly present, Ishmael recognized the thoughtful heart and careful hand of Bee, and grateful affectionate tears filled his eyes. He went below stairs to a back parlor, where he felt sure he should find Bee presiding over the indoor amusements of her younger brothers and sisters.

And sure enough there the pretty little motherly maiden was among the children.

Ishmael went straight up to her, saying, in fervent tones:

"I thank you, Bee; I thank you very much for remembering me!"

"Why, who should remember you if not I, Ishmael? Are you not like one of ourselves? And should I forget you any sooner than I should forget Walter, or James, or John?" said Bee, with a pleasant smile.

"Ah, Bee! I have neither mother nor sister to think of me at festive times; but you, dear Bee, you make me forget the need of either."

"You have 'neither mother nor sister,' Ishmael? Now, do not think so, while my dear mother and myself live; for I am sure she loves you as a son, Ishmael, and I love you—as a brother," answered Bee, speaking comfort to the lonely youth from the depths of her own pure, kind heart. But ah! the intense blush that followed her words might have revealed to an interested observer how much more than any brother she loved Ishmael Worth!

Judge Merlin, Claudia, Mr. and Mrs. Middleton and Ishmael went to church.

Bee stayed home to see that the nurses took proper care of the children.

They had a family Christmas dinner.

And after that Ishmael excused himself, and went over to the "Plough," to spend the evening with Reuben and Hannah. That evening the three friends went to the theatre, and saw their first play—the Comedy of Errors—together. And it did many an old, satiated play-goer good to see the hearty zest with which honest Reuben enjoyed the fun. Nor was Hannah or Ishmael much behind him in their keen appreciation of the piece; only, at those passages at which Hannah and Ishmael only smiled, Reuben rubbed his knees, and laughed aloud, startling all the audience.

"It's a good thing I don't live in the city, Hannah, my dear, for I would go to the play every night!" said Reuben, as they left the theatre at the close of the performance.

"And it is a good thing you don't, Reuben, for it would be the ruination of you!" admitted Hannah.

They went back to the "Plough," where the Christmas supper was served for them in the plain little private sitting-room. After partaking moderately of its delicacies, Ishmael bade them good night, and returned home.

Reuben and Hannah staid a week in the city. Reuben took her about to see all the sights and to shop in all the stores. And on New Year's day, when the President received the public, Reuben took Hannah to the White House, to "pay their duty" to the chief magistrate of the nation. And the day after New Year's day, they took leave of Ishmael and of all their friends, and returned home, delighted with the memory of their pleasant visit to the city.

Ishmael, after all these interruptions, returned with new zest to his duties, and, as before, worked diligently day and night.

Claudia went deeper into her preparations for her first appearance in society, at the President's first drawing-room of the season.

The night of nights for the heiress came. After dinner, Claudia indulged herself with a long nap, so that she might be quite fresh in the evening. When she woke up, she took a cup of tea, and immediately retired to her chamber to dress.

Mrs. Middleton superintended her toilet.

Claudia wore a rich point lace dress over a white satin skirt. The wreath that crowned her head, the necklace that reposed upon her bosom, the bracelets that clasped her arms, the girdle that enclosed her waist, and the bunches of flowers that festooned her upper lace dress, were all of the same rich pattern—lilies of the valley, whose blossoms were formed of pearl, whose leaves were of emeralds, and whose dew was of diamonds. Snowy gloves and snowy shoes completed this toilet, the effect of which was rich, chaste and elegant beyond description. Mrs. Middleton wore a superb dress of ruby-colored velvet.

When they were both quite ready, they went down into the drawing-room, where Judge Merlin, Mr. Middleton and Ishmael were awaiting them, and where Claudia's splendid presence suddenly dazzled them. Mr. Middleton and Judge Merlin gazed upon the radiant beauty with undisguised admiration. And Ishmael looked on with a deep, unuttered groan. How dared he love this stately, resplendant queen? How dared he hope she would ever deign to notice him? But the next instant he reproached himself for the groan and the doubt—How could he have been so fooled by a mere shimmer of satin and glitter of jewels?

Judge Merlin and Mr. Middleton were in the conventional evening dress of gentlemen, and were quite ready to attend the ladies. They had nothing to do therefore but to hand them to the carriage, which they accordingly did. The party of four—Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, Judge Merlin and Claudia—drove off.

Ishmael and Beatrice remained at home. Ishmael to study his law books; Beatrice to give the boys their supper and see that the nurses took proper care of the children.

CHAPTER LII.

AN EVENING AT THE PRESIDENT'S.

There was a sound of revelry by night—
"Columbia's" capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry:—and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men.
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes that spoke again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell. BYRON.

The carriage rolled along Pennsylvania Avenue. The weather had changed since sun-set; and the evening was misty with a light, drizzling rain. Yet still the scene was a gay, busy and enlivening one; the gas-lamps that lighted the avenue gleamed brightly through the rain-drops like smiles through tears; the sidewalks were filled with pedestrians, and the middle of the street with vehicles—all going in one direction—to the President's palace.

A decorously slow drive of fifteen minutes brought our party through this gay scene to a gayer one at the north gate of the President's park, where a great crowd of carriages were drawn up, waiting their turn to drive in.

The gates were open and lighted by four tall lamps placed upon the posts, and which illuminated the whole scene.

Judge Merlin's carriage drew up on the outskirts of this crowd of vehicles, to wait his turn to enter; but he soon found himself enclosed in the centre of the assemblage by other carriages that had come after his own. He had to wait full fifteen minutes before he could fall into the procession that was slowly making its way through the right-hand gate, and along the lighted circular avenue that led up to the front entrance of the palace. Even on this misty night, the grounds were gayly illuminated and well filled. But crowded as the scene was, the utmost order prevailed. The carriages that came up the right-hand avenue full of visitors, discharged them at the entrance hall and rolled away empty down the left-hand avenue; so that there was a continuous procession of full carriages coming up one way and empty carriages going down the other.

At length Judge Merlin's carriage, coming slowly along in the line, drew up in its turn before the front of the mansion. The whole façade of the White House was splendidly illuminated, as if to express in radiant light a smiling welcome! The halls were occupied by attentive officers who received the visitors and ushered them into cloak rooms. Within the house also, great as the crowd of visitors was, the most perfect order prevailed.

Judge Merlin and his party were received by a civil, respectable official, who directed them to a cloak room; and they soon found themselves in a close, orderly crowd moving thitherward. When the gentlemen had succeeded in convoying their ladies safely to this bourne and seen them well over its threshold, they retired to the receptacle where they were to leave their hats and overcoats before coming back to take their parties into the saloon.

In the ladies' cloak room, Claudia and her chaperone found themselves in a brilliant, impracticable crowd. There were about half-a-dozen tall dressing glasses in the place, and about half-a-hundred young ladies were trying to smooth braids and ringlets and adjust wreathes and coronets by their aid. And there were about half-a-hundred more in the centre of the room; some taking off opera cloaks, shaking out flounces, and waiting their turns to go to the mirrors; and some, quite ready and waiting the appearance of their escort at the door to take them to the saloon; and beside these some were coming in and some were passing out continually; and through the open doors the crowds of those newly arriving and the crowds of those passing on to the reception rooms, were always visible.

Claudia looked upon this seething multitude with a shudder.

"What a scene!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, but with all, what order! There never has been such order and system in these crowded receptions as now under the management of Mrs. ———" said Mrs. Middleton, naming the accomplished lady who, that season, ruled the domestic affairs of the White House.

As Mrs. Middleton and Claudia had finished their toilets, to the sticking of the very last pin, before leaving their dressing-rooms at home, they had now nothing to do but to give their opera cloaks to a woman in attendance and then stand near the door to watch for the appearance of Judge Merlin and Mr. Middleton. They had but a few minutes to wait. The gentlemen soon came and gave their arms to their ladies and led them to join the throng that were slowly making their way through the crowded halls and ante-rooms towards the audience chamber, where the President received his visitors. It was a severe ordeal, the passage of those halls. Our party, like all their companions, were pressed forward in the crowd until they were fairly pushed into the presence-chamber, known as the small crimson drawing-room, in which the President and his family waited to receive their visitors.

Yes! there he stood! the majestic old man, with his kingly gray head bared, and his stately form clothed in the Republican citizen's dress *of simple black! There he stood, fresh from the victories of a score of well-fought fields,* receiving the meed of honor won by his years, his patriotism and his courage! A crowd of admirers perpetually passed before him; by the orderly arrangement of the ushers, they came up on the right hand side, bowed or curtsied before him, received a cordial shake of the hand, a smile and a few kind words, and then passed on to the left towards the great saloon commonly known as the East Room. Perhaps never has any President since Washington made himself so much beloved by the people as did General —— during his short administration. Great love-compelling power had that dignified and benignant old-man! Fit to be the chief magistrate of a great, free people he was! At least so thought Judge Merlin's daughter as she curtsied before him, received the cordial shake of his hand, heard the kind tones of his voice say —"I am very glad to see you, my dear"—and passed on with the throng who were proceeding toward the East Room.

Once arrived in that magnificent room, they found space enough even for that vast crowd to move about in. This room is too well known to the public to need any labored description. For the information of those who have never seen it, it is sufficient to say that its dimensions are magnificent, its decorations superb, its furniture luxurious, and its illuminations splendid. Three enormous chandeliers, like constellations, flooded the scene with light, and a fine brass band, somewhere out of sight, filled the air with music. A brilliant company enlivened, but did not crowd, the room. There were assembled beautiful girls, handsome women, gorgeous old ladies; there were officers of the army and of the navy in their full dress uniforms; there were the diplomatic corps of all foreign nations in the costumes of their several ranks and countries; there were grave senators and wise judges and holy divines; there were Indian chiefs in their beads and blankets; there were adventurous Poles from Warsaw; exiled Bourbons from Paris; and Camanché braves from the Cordilleras! There was, in fact, such a curious assemblage as can be met with no where on the face of the earth but in the east drawing-room of our President's palace on a great reception evening!

Into this motley but splendid assemblage Judge Merlin led his beautiful daughter. At first her entrance attracted no attention; but when one, and then another, noticed the dazzling new star of beauty that had so suddenly risen above their horizon, a whisper arose that soon grew into a general buzz of admiration that attended Claudia in her progress through the room and heralded her approach to those at the upper end. And—

"Who is she?" "Who can she be?" were the low-toned questions that reached her ear as her father led her to a sofa and rested her upon it. But these questions came only from those who were strangers in Washington. Of course all others knew the person of Judge Merlin, and surmised the young lady on his arm to be his daughter.

Soon after the judge and his party were seated, his friends began to come forward to pay their respects to him, and to be presented to his beautiful daughter.

Claudia received all these with a self-possession, grace and fascination, peculiarly her own.

There was no doubt about it!—Miss Merlin's first entrance into society had been a great success; she had made a sensation.

Among those presented to Miss Merlin on that occasion was the Honorable ——— ———, the British Minister. He was young, handsome, accomplished, and a bachelor! Consequently he was a target for all the shafts of Cupid that ladies' eyes could send.

He offered his arm to Miss Merlin for a promenade through the room. She accepted it, and became as much the envy of every unmarried lady present, as if the offer made and accepted had been for a promenade through life!

No such thought, however, was in the young English minister's mind; for after making the circuit of the room two or three times, he brought his companion back, and, with a smile and a bow, left her in the care of her father.

But if the people were inclined to feed their envy, they found plenty of food for that appetite. A few minutes after Miss Merlin had resumed her seat, a general buzz of voices announced some new event of interest. It turned out to be the entrance of the President and his family into the East Room.

For some good reason or other, known only to his own friendly heart, the President, sauntering leisurely, dispensing bows, smiles and kind words as he passed, went straight up to the sofa whereon his old friend, Judge Merlin, sat, took a seat beside him, and entered into conversation.

Ah! their talk was not about state affairs, foreign or domestic policy, duties, imports, war, peace—no! their talk was of their boyhood's days, spent together; of the holidays they had had; of the orchards they had robbed; of the well-meritted thrashings they had got; and of the good old school-master, long since dust and ashes, who had lectured and flogged them!

Claudia listened, and loved the old man more, that he could turn from the memory of his bloody victories, the presence of his political cares, and the prospects of a divided cabinet, to refresh himself with the green reminiscences of his boyhood's days. It was impossible for the young girl to feel so much sympathy without betraying it and attracting the attention of the old man. He looked at her. He had shaken hands with her, and said that he was glad to see her, when she was presented to him in his presence chamber; but he had not really seen her; she had been only one of the passing crowd of curtesyers for whom he felt a wholesale kindness and expressed a wholesale good-will; now, however, he looked at her—now he saw her!

Sixty-five years had whitened the hair of General ——, but he was not insensible to the charms of beauty; nor unconscious of his own power of conferring honor upon beauty.

Rising, therefore, with all the stately courtesy of the old school gentleman, he offered his arm to Miss Merlin for a promenade through the rooms.

With a sweet smile, Claudia arose, and once more became the cynosure of all eyes and the envy of all hearts! A few turns through the rooms, and the President brought the beauty back, seated her, and took his own seat beside her on the sofa.

But the cup of bitterness for the envious was not yet full! Another hum and buzz went around the room, announcing some new event of great interest; which seemed to be a late arrival of much importance.

Presently the British minister and another gentleman was seen approaching the sofa where sat the President, Judge Merlin, Miss Merlin, and Mr. and Mrs. Middleton. They paused immediately before the President, when the minister said:

"Your Excellency, permit me to present to you the Viscount Vincent, late from London."

The President arose and heartily shook hands with the young foreigner, cordially saying:

"I am happy to see you, my lord; happy to welcome you to Washington."

The viscount bowed low before the gray-haired old hero, saying, in a low tone:

"I am glad to see the President of the United States; but I am proud to shake the hand of the conqueror of—of——"

The viscount paused, his memory suddenly failed him; for the life and soul of him he could not remember the jaw-breaking, ear-splitting names of those bloody fields where the General had won his laurels.

The President gracefully covered the hesitation of the viscount, and evaded his compliment at the same time by turning to the ladies of his party and presenting his guest, saying:

"Mrs. Middleton, Lord Vincent. Miss Merlin, Lord Vincent."

The viscount bowed low to these ladies, who courteously returned his salutation.

"My old friend, Judge Merlin, Lord Vincent," then said the plain, matter-of-fact, old President.

The judge and the viscount simultaneously bowed, and then, these formalities being over, seats were found for the two strangers, and the whole group fell into an easy chat—subject of discussion the old question that is sure to be argued whenever the old world and the new meet—the rival merits of monarchies and republics. The discussion grew warm; though the disputants remained courteous. The viscount grew bored and gradually dropped out of the argument, leaving the subject in the hands of the President and the Minister, who, of course, had taken opposite sides, the Minister representing the advantages of a monarchial form of government, and the President contending for a republican one. The viscount noticed that a large portion of the company were promenading in a procession round and round the room to the music of one of Bethoven's grand marches. It was monotonous enough; but it was better than sitting there and listening to the vexed question, whether "the peoples" were capable of governing themselves. So he turned to Miss Merlin with a bow and smile, saying:

"Shall we join the promenade? Will you so far honor me?"

"With pleasure, my lord," replied Miss Merlin.

And he rose and gave her his arm, and they walked away. And for the third time that evening, Claudia became the target of all sorts of glances—glances of admiration, glances of hate! She had been led out by the young English Minister; then by the old President; and now she was promenading with the lion of the evening, the only titled person at this republican court, the Viscount Vincent. And she a new-comer, a mere girl, not twenty years old! It was intolerable, thought all the ladies, young and old, married or single.

But if the beautiful Claudia was the envy of all the women, the handsome Vincent was not less the envy of all the men present. "Puppy;" "coxcomb;" "Jack-an-ape;" "swell;" "Viscount, indeed! more probably, some foreign blackleg, or barber;" "It is perfectly ridiculous the manner in which American girls throw themselves under the feet of these titled foreign paupers," were some of the low-breathed blessings bestowed upon young Lord Vincent. And yet these expletives were not intended to be half so malignant as they might have sounded. They were but the impulsive expressions of transient vexation at seeing the very pearl of beauty, on the first evening of her appearance, carried off by an alien.

In truth, the viscount and the heiress were a very handsome couple; and notwithstanding all the envy felt for them, all eyes followed them with secret admiration. The beautiful Claudia was a rare type of the young American girl—tall, slender, graceful, dark-haired, dark-eyed, with a rich, glowing bloom on cheeks and lips. And her snow-white dress of misty lace over shining satin, and her gleaming pearls and sparkling diamonds set off her beauty well. Vincent was a fine specimen of the young English gentleman—tall, broad-shouldered, deep-chested; with a stately head; a fair, roseate complexion; light brown, curling hair and beard; and clear, blue eyes. And his simple evening dress of speckless black became him well. His manners were graceful, his voice pleasant, and his conversation brilliant; but, alas, for Claudia! the greatest charm he possessed for her was—his title! Claudia knew another, handsomer, more graceful, more brilliant, than this viscount; but that other was unknown, untitled and unnamed in the world! The viscount was so engaged with his beautiful companion, that it was some time before he observed that the company was dropping off and the room was half empty. He then led Miss Merlin back to her party, took a slight leave of them all, bowed to the President and departed.

Judge Merlin, who had only waited for his daughter, now arose to go. His party made their adieux and left the saloon. As so many of the guests had already gone, they found the halls and ante-rooms comparatively free of crowds, and easily made their way to the gentlemen's cloak-room and the ladies' dressing-room, and thence to the entrance hall. Mr. Middleton went out to call the carriage, which was near at hand. And the whole party entered and drove homeward. The sky had not cleared, the drizzle still continued; but the lamps gleamed brightly through the rain-drops, and the avenue was as gay at midnight as it had been at mid-day. As the carriage rolled along, Judge Merlin and Mr. and Mrs. Middleton discussed the reception, the president, the company, and especially the young English viscount.

"He is the son and heir of the Earl of Hurstmonceaux, whose estates lie somewhere in the rich county of Sussex. The title did not come to the present earl in the direct line of descent. The late earl died childless, at a very advanced age; and the title fell to his distant relation, Lord Banff, the father of this young man, whose estates lie away up in the North of Scotland somewhere. Thus the Scottish Lord Banff became Earl of Hurstmonceaux, and his eldest son, our new acquaintance, took the second title in the family and became Lord Vincent," said Judge Merlin.

"The English minister gave you this information?" inquired Mr. Middleton.

"Yes, he did; I suppose he thought it but right to put me in possession of all such facts in relation to the young foreigner whom he had been instrumental in introducing to my family. But, by the way, Middleton—*Hurstmonceaux?* Was not that the title of the young dowager countess whom Brudenell married and parted with, years ago?"

"Yes; and I suppose that she was the widow of that very old man, the late Earl of Hurstmonceaux, who died childless; in fact, she must have been."

"I wonder whatever became of her?"

"I do not know; I know nothing whatever about the *last* Countess of Hurstmonceaux; but I know very well who has a fair prospect of becoming the *next* Countess of Hurstmonceaux, if she pleases!" replied Mr. Middleton, with a merry glance at his niece.

Claudia, who had been a silent, thoughtful and attentive listener to their conversation, did not reply, but smothered a sigh and turned to look out of the window. The carriage was just drawing up before their own gate.

The whole face of the house was closed and darkened, except one little light that burned in a small front window at the very top of the house.

It was Ishmael's lamp; and as plainly as if she had been in his room, Claudia, in imagination, saw the pale young face bent studiously over the volume lying open before him.

With another hard sigh, Claudia gave her hand to her uncle, who had left the carriage to help her out. And then the whole party entered the house, where they were admitted by the sleepy Jim.

And in another half hour they were all in repose.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

SACRED MELODY.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Shadow him over with holiest palms,
That sprung where the blest rivers flow—
His spirit is full of the glorious psalms
The minstrel-king sung long ago.

II.

And bring from the garden of Sharon a rose,
White lilies from Siloa bring—
His forehead with paradise-radiance glows
At the touch of the Paraclete's wing.

III.

O list!—how the harmony leaps from his lyre!
O list!—what soul in his song,
Breathing Peace, bloodless mercy and glorified fire
That burns in the Seraphim's throng!

IV.

Not a flame of Earth's godless ambition is here
Not a thought of Time's low, sordid strife;
He is circled alone by a paradise-sphere
As he sings of the pure upper life.

V.

Then shadow him over with holiest palms
That sprung where the blest rivers flow—
His spirit is full of the glorious psalms
That the minstrel-king sung long ago!

SHE MADE A MAN OF HIM!

BY EDWARD GLYDON.

Fred. Harper coming in to see Hattie Evans one evening, opened his eyes to an unusual extent at the sight of a Union badge worn coquettishly upon the white shoulder, gleaming through its transparent muslin.

Hattie was enthusiastic about a new project which had just been broached in the social circles of Milford. It was proposed to form a company of the young men of the place to join one of the regiments being sent by the State to the Army of the Potomac. But this company was to be composed entirely of select material, the young men of a certain set, all of whom were known to each other. The idea had originated among the young ladies of the place, who had entered into the work heart and soul, and who were stimulating the young men by smiles, threats or persuasions, as the case might require.

Hattie Evans had constituted herself a volunteer recruiting-sergeant, and had been immensely successful. Fred. Harper was absent in New York on law business for his father when the thing was started, therefore, as we have said, he opened his eyes on his return home, on beholding the existing state of things. He was a quiet, dreamy sort of a young man, very sentimental and very poetical, slight and small of figure, with a wonderfully well developed head; brown curls,—the eyes and forehead of a poet,—and was always "sighing like a furnace" when he wasn't writing awfully improbable poetry, as Hattie herself expressed it.

Hattie was a bright, wholesome, practical girl—healthy of mind and body; and pretty enough to make even a want of sentiment in herself seem sprightly and attractive. She had no doubt as to Fred.'s decision on the volunteer question. Of course he would go, and by his bravery win a general's commission. She did not even think it necessary to ask him if he intended to go.

But Fred.'s mother—a lady with an executive nose and likewise an executive disposition—had decided it the other way for him. She wasn't particularly patriotic, and having a husband whom she snubbed and did not love excessively, was prone to concentrate all the sentiment of her nature on this sole scion "of her heart and house," as Fred. truly was. Moreover, Fred., being gentle and yielding of disposition in all ordinary matters, had never disputed a question with his mother in his life, or if he had, certainly, it was only to come off second best. So Mrs. Harper had come to think that she was to rule her son all his life. And she did not like Hattie Evans overmuch, but she comforted herself with the reflection that she might rule her son's wife as well as her son, if he *must* get married—she was too sensible to expect him to live single all his life.

So when Mrs. Harper said "You *sha'n't* go," Fred. was in a sore strait, for he knew that Hattie would say "You *must* go." His mother threatened to go into a decline and die out of hand if he persisted in exposing himself to the chances of being sun-struck or bullet-struck, while Hattie would doubt his courage if he remained behind. Finally, habit and Mrs. Harper gained the mastery and Fred. succumbed. He went to Hattie and told her of it; she saw that even then she could have influenced him to make a far different decision. And at first her eyes flashed and spirited words sprang to her lips, then she thought—"It is *his mother!* God forbid that I should come between mother and son!" And her head drooped. Therefore she said no word in opposition to his determination, but she was very silent for the rest of the evening.

She had the night to think over the matter, and in the morning she arose pale but strong and wrote to Fred. this letter:

> "You must ever be dear to me. My terrible struggle with my heart last night has told me through throbs of pain, *how* dear. But with me pride is stronger than love. Fred., I will not say one word to you against what you have decided upon. I cannot stand between a mother and a son. But I should be a hypocrite if I did not tell you now, once and for all, that I can never marry a man whose *sense of duty* is not paramount to all earthly affection—even for myself."

Fred. needed some such shock as this to rouse him to the stern realities of life. Heretofore he had been a dreamer, and had been nurtured into manhood so tenderly by a mistaken mother that he was well nigh spoilt for all manly purposes.

With a woman's instinct, Hattie knew this, and she also knew that the present crisis was the turning point of his life.

He sighed and protested and wrote doleful verses, all to no purpose. Hattie was firm—the engagement was broken; and Mrs. Harper exulted greatly thereat.

But Fred. grew gloomy and thoughtful; and one morning his mother found a letter under her plate at the breakfast table, bidding her "Good-bye," and stating that he had taken the early train to join his regiment at Washington. She went into awful hysterics, and on coming out of them went directly to Hattie's home, and then upbraided her as "the murderer of her only son," laying it all to her charge, and, declaring if he should die or be killed, his blood would be upon her head; and then went off into a second fit. Hattie felt as if some one had stabbed her in the heart. She felt that Fred. was right in going, and she loved him better than ever for it; but it was terrible to feel that he might have gone to his death, and worse: if he *should* be killed, that while she should go mourning all her life, his mother would lay all *that terrible responsibility upon her shoulders.* But what could she have done? She could not marry a coward.

Thereafter, Hattie lived as a man lives who holds his breath in constant dread of some awful catastrophe. Time went on; he was well, and getting to be in love with a soldier's life; he had been in several battles, and had been promoted. Oh! how proud poor Hattie was of him! It had needed only this trial-time to bring out his really noble character in all its strength. Hattie was satisfied, and leant upon her love for him with a perfect faith.

By-and-by came the news, "Hooker's across!" and all the terrible fighting of that ill-fated advance across the Rappahannock. And the tidings came that Captain Fred. Harper had been brought to Washington, fatally wounded, it was thought.

Mrs. Harper went wild.

"Oh! Hattie Evans, you have killed my son!" and took to her bed.

But Hattie Evans rose up and began to prepare for a journey.

"Where are you going?" they said.

And she answered them:

"To Washington, to bring him home; or to stay with him until the last."

And she did go with the escort that went for that purpose. Every hour and every minute she was haunted by the vision of a dead face, and a motionless figure stiffening into that terrible quiet which comes to us only once. Oh, God! how hard to realize it!

With this figure before her eyes, she stepped from the cars at the Washington depot, and did not see an officer, with his arm in a sling, who was likewise looking at something in the distance, until she came into collision with him, and was nearly thrown down. He raised his cap and turned quickly to apologize; and the living face usurped the place of the dead one! It was Fred. Harper.

Coming back to life out of death is something like the way in which she felt how she fully realized that he was a flesh and blood verity, though a very pale one, and no optical delusion. She clung to him, as if she would never let him go again. He had been wounded in the arm, at first dangerously the surgeon thought, but there had been a very careless mistake in reporting it as fatal. He had not known of it. All the danger which the surgeon had feared—mortification—was now past. And he was fast on the point of starting for home when he jostled against Hattie.

Hattie went home as Mrs. Colonel Harper; (as the Jenkinses of American society have a way of expressing titles.) But the morning after this rencontre—they had been married "out of hand," the eve of the night of her arrival—in combing out her long, bright hair before the glass, she gave a little shriek:

"Just look, Fred.!"

Fred. looked—and I will tell you, there was a silver streak about a quarter of an inch in thickness on one side of her head, and striping her beautiful hair! And what had caused it? Can you not guess? Turning from the glass she fell into his arms, and whispered, through her sobs:

"Oh, darling! if I had not known before how *much* I loved you, the sight of *this*—which is a souvenir of that terrible night's journey to Washington—when I saw you before me, cold and still—*dead*—would tell me!"

But she made a man of him! I do not think any one will ever again call Fred. Harper a dreamer or a coward. And I have not heard that Mrs. Harper grumbled any when Fred. came home, looking ten times more manly, and wearing the shoulder straps of a colonel.

But I think that never a day passes that he does not kiss that queer, little, silver streak in Hattie's bright, brown hair. She is not any the less lovely for it now.

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

CHAPTER LXV.

And be those juggling fiends no more believed,
Who palter with us in a double sense;
Who keep the word of promise to the ear,
And break it to the hope. SHAKESPEARE.

No sooner was Sam released from prison than he hastened, on the wings of terror and affection, to the residence of the worthy pastor, passed the servant, who admitted him without a word, and rushed, pale as a spectre, into the room where his sister and Mr. Austin were seated.

"Where is Blanche?" he demanded, looking wildly round him.

"My poor, poor brother!" sobbed Bessie, throwing herself into his arms.

The strong man staggered, as if he had received a violent blow. The pastor approached, and took his unresisting hand. He, too, could hardly speak; emotion choked his utterance.

"The ways of Providence are dark, my son," he faltered, "and inscrutable to human sight. We ask in vain why His hand afflicts us; it is useless to question his purposes: the voice of Faith alone replies to us, and bids us hope; all that weak man can do is to bow the head humbly and submit."

"Where is Blanche?" repeated the distracted husband.

Mr. Austin would have continued his well-meant exhortations, but Mrs. Glyde motioned him to be silent; in her woman's nature she acted far more wisely than the uncle; she knew by experience how vain are all attempts at consolation under the first shock of a great sorrow. Instead of words, she gave her brother tears.

"Dead!" murmured Sam.

"No, not dead!" exclaimed the clergyman, hastily.

"Gone, then! torn from me by that villain! Oh, I see it now: the insult—the quarrel forced upon me—the arrest—the illegal imprisonment! It was necessary to render powerless her protector's arm, to accomplish his vile purpose; but I will pursue him—pursue him to the ends of the earth! the grave shall not screen him from my wrath, nor Heaven, nor——"

"Worm!" interrupted Mr. Austin, with great dignity, "shut not the gates of mercy by blaspheming."

"God help me!" said the poor fellow, bursting into a passionate flood of sorrow. "The strength I was so proud of is useless now, and I am helpless as a child."

Bessie rejoiced at the sight, as indicating a relief to his feelings, and let him weep on.

Gradually they imparted the details of the sad event; how Blanche had been deluded into accompanying the pretended agent of police, the carrying her off, and the sailing of the Snake.

"Gone! lost to me for ever!" exclaimed Sam, in a tone of voice so heart-broken that his hearers shuddered as he spoke. "Tears are useless now; I shall find time for sorrow when I have avenged her."

Drying his bloodshot eyes, he rose to quit the room.

"Where are you going?" demanded his sister, clinging to him.

"Vengeance is the Lord's," ejaculated the pastor, solemnly.

"You shall not leave me," continued Bessie, greatly alarmed for his safety; "you are the only protector left to me and my fatherless children in this strange land."

"Do not fear," replied her brother, with forced calmness; "I will be cool—oh! so cool, that men shall wonder at my patience. I must not put myself in the power of the wretches who have plotted the destruction of my happiness, by an aimless vengeance, which, after all, would only reach the miserable agents of my enemy. It is Welby—the fiend himself—that I would seek."

"Impossible!" urged Mrs. Glyde; "he has fled——"

"I know it," interrupted Sam; "fled with his victim. I would give my life," he added, wildly—"life, did I say?—I would give my soul to be near him for one instant."

It was an impious wish, no doubt; an offer which the despair of an outraged husband alone could palliate. Reason had no share in it; the cry was torn from him by the agony of crushed affection.

Let us hope the record and the sin are both effaced.

At the office of the British consulate, the story of their fellow-countryman met with the strongest sympathy by all who heard it—a sympathy in which even the treacherous consul himself pretended to share. A strong representation of the facts was drawn up and forwarded to General Butler, who of course could render the outraged husband no assistance.

His last visit was paid to the office of the agents of Captain Drake. One of the partners fortunately proved to be an Englishman, who listened to his narration with looks of incredulity and wonder.

"Your wife carried off—carried off on board the Snake, did you say?"

"Yes," answered the husband, gloomily.

"There must be some mistake," replied the worthy man; "Captain Drake is the last man in the world to lend himself to such a transaction. His wife, too, on board! You don't know his wife. A most excellent person; rather odd, perhaps, in her manners, but exceedingly correct in her principles. I speak from the knowledge of years. Rely upon it, if any one of her own sex has been deluded or forced on board the Snake, no outrage will be offered her so long as Mrs. Drake sails in her."

These words afforded the first faint gleam of hope to the wretched husband's almost broken heart.

"But why not follow her?" continued the agent. "With diligence you may arrive at New York almost, if not quite, as soon as the vessel. The wind has not been over-favorable, and——"

Sam waited to hear no more, but uttering a cry of joy, shook the speaker by the hand, muttered his broken thanks, and rushed out of the office.

An hour later he had quitted New Orleans upon his fruitless errand. His fellow-countryman was not to blame; he had given the information in perfect good faith: the real destination of the Snake being a secret to all but her commander, his better half, and the parties who had chartered her.

"Go 'way, ma'm; please go 'way," muttered the treacherous old negress, as Mrs. Drake presented herself at the door of the prisoner's cabin. "Missie berry bad; no bear strange face. Can her, darlin'?"

"Do not leave me," shrieked Blanche.

In an instant the hand of the negress was upon her lips, endeavoring to stifle her appeals for protection.

"Dare, ma'm, you hear."

The captain's wife had seen as well as heard. She was a very resolute person, and entered the cabin without any further hesitation.

"Do you intend to murder her?" she asked.

"Murder! Me murder my own darlin' missie!"

"Take your hand from her mouth, then."

"Dat only way make to quiet her, ma'm."

During this brief colloquy the eyes of Blanche were most eloquent in their mute supplication. Fortunately, the Englishwoman understood her, and with a strength few persons would have given her credit for, she dragged the negress from the side of the couch.

The woman drew from beneath her light cotton jacket a long glittering knife.

"Don't be alarmed, my dear," said Mrs. Drake, speaking with the utmost composure; "I am not, in the slightest. Sands," she added, "you may come in."

The broad-shouldered Northumbrian sailor, whose remarks had first excited her suspicions, made his appearance.

"What's your will, marm?" he asked, touching his forelock respectfully, in lieu of his cap.

"Take that black creature out of the cabin."

"Directly, marm."

The negress uttered a low, menacing cry, which sounded something like the growl of a disappointed panther, and stood evidently prepared to resist.

"Take her away, I say."

Sands grappled with the woman, and after a short struggle, disarmed her; not without receiving a severe cut, however, upon the palm of his right hand.

"Are you much hurt, Sands?" inquired the female commander.

"It be only a scratch, marm."

"Glad to hear it," replied the lady; "but as scratching, especially with knives, is not allowed on board the Snake, you will take that woman below decks."

"Yes, marm."

"Handcuff her, to prevent more mischief, and confine her there till further orders. And, Sands, pass the word to the crew to take no notice of what has occurred."

"I'd like to catch any one splitting after the captain's lady has passed the word," replied the sailor, with a broad grin. "Come, no mutiny," he added, turning to the negress; "you heard?"

"Me no go. Dis Massa Welby ship; dat woman no bizziness send me 'way."

"Come," repeated Sands.

"Me no go, I tell you; me scream, me cry for 'sistence. Help, Massa Welby—help—hel——"

The third help was cut short by the hand of the honest fellow, who had seen the manner in which she stifled the cries of her prisoner, and, despite her resistance, he succeeded in dragging her from the cabin.

Poor Blanche, all this while, remained in an agony of hope and fear; she knew not what to expect or trust to. Throwing her arms suddenly round the neck of the protectress Providence appeared to have suddenly raised up for her, she let fall her head upon her shoulders, sobbing like a child, and murmuring her broken thanks.

"There, my dear, that will do," said Mrs. Drake, who rarely gave way to emotion of any kind—she considered it *unseaman-like*. "Tell me all about it. Bless me, how you have rumpled my collar! Has your brother," she continued, "brought you on board against your will?"

"Brother!" repeated Blanche. "I have no brother!"

"Ah! I thought not."

"I have a husband—a brave, noble, affectionate husband!"

"Who was killed in one of the late battles, fighting against the Southerners?" observed the captain's wife, speaking very composedly. "I have heard all about him. Very dreadful, no doubt. By-the-by, I wonder you are not in widow's weeds."

"My husband is still living; or was so yesterday," answered Blanche, bursting into tears.

Her hearer regarded her doubtfully.

"He is a prisoner in New Orleans—kept from me three whole days. I understand why, now: to enable my persecutor to carry me off. But you will save me?" continued the agitated girl, her fears returning. "I am an Englishwoman, like yourself; my father, at least, was English. You will not suffer me to be insulted, outraged by the presence of that fearful man?"

"What fearful man, my dear?" demanded Mrs. Drake, who began to suspect that the mind of the speaker was wandering. "I do not know his name. Is it Welby?"

"He is related to the British consul," replied Blanche; "and his influence occasioned my husband's unjust imprisonment. There, read! Do not look so doubtingly at me, as if I were not speaking truthfully."

She placed in the hands of her protectress the note written by Mr. Austin, whilst waiting at the Government House for the order to visit the prisoner. The captain's wife perused it attentively, and, after some further questioning, began to see clearly through the affair.

"It is rather difficult to understand you at first, my dear," she observed; "but that perhaps is because you have, doubtless, read a great many novels. Now, I never read one in my life—a great advantage in serious matters. Had I been in your position, I could have told my story in two minutes. No one would have suspected me of being mad."

"Mad?" repeated Blanche.

"Yes."

"Who could have told you so?"

"Mr. Welby."

His victim shuddered as she heard the name.

"He said that you were out of your senses for the loss of your husband, killed in battle, and that your shrieks at times were really heart-rending. No untruth in that."

"And you believed him?"

"Of course I did."

"The monster!"

"Men are all alike," remarked Mrs. Drake, with the utmost composure, "or nearly so. It is not often, though, that they deceive me. In your case I had no motive for suspicion; if I had, do you imagine I would have permitted you to be brought on board the Snake, like a bale of smuggled goods? I should think not. But now that I know the exact truth——"

"You will not leave me! for pity's sake do not quit me for an instant!" exclaimed the terrified girl, clinging a second time to her protectress.

"Leave you?" replied the little woman, drily; "I should think not, my dear. What do you take me for?"

"Bless you! bless you for that promise."

"That will do," observed the captain's wife, disengaging herself from her embrace; "you have rumpled my collar again. Be under no alarm, you are quite safe on board *my ship*; the worst that can happen is a sea-voyage—nothing like it for strengthening the nerves. Good for your health; you seem rather weak."

There was nothing very sympathizing either in the words or manner of the speaker, and yet she meant to be so. In her disposition she resembled the Indian nut—the outside rough and forbidding, but the kernel full of the sweet milk of human kindness. She was one of those women who never shrink from the performance of a duty, no matter how painful or disagreeable, but accepted it as a thing not to be avoided or tampered with.

Rising from the couch on which she had hitherto been seated, she walked with an air of quiet determination towards the cabin door—oh, how anxiously the eyes of Blanche followed her!—and called for Sands.

"On deck, marm," shouted a boyish voice.

"Pass the word for him."

"D'rectly, marm."

In a few minutes the sailor made his appearance, pulled his forelock a second time, and stood waiting for orders.

"The negress?" said the captain's wife.

"Safe under hatches."

"Keep her there."

"Intend to do so, marm; savage as a wild cat. It's downright awful to hear how she's goin' on."

"Don't let any of the boys go near her; they learn wickedness quite soon enough. Tell the steward to send my tea here; the captain will take his in his own cabin."

"He is taking wine with the two landsmen," observed Sands; "they have just rang for more."

Mrs. Drake did not appear altogether pleased at the intelligence.

"Send them in coffee," she said; "do them much more good."

"Any more orders, marm?"

"Yes, bring me my Bible."

Mrs. Drake succeeded at last not only in calming the agitation of her involuntary passenger, but in persuading her to take some refreshment.

"You must," she urged, "to keep up your strength; and I will add something to do you good."

Having been for so many years accustomed to accompany her husband in his voyages, the intelligent little woman never travelled without her medicine chest: what was more, she knew how to use it. The captain and the crew had unbounded confidence in her prescriptions—not very remarkable, perhaps, on the part of the husband, but certainly on the part of the sailors, who, generally speaking, entertain a profound contempt for all doctor's stuff.

"What is that?" inquired Blanche, curiously, when she saw her dropping a dark-looking liquid from a small phial carefully into her tea.

"Laudanum, my dear. Five—six—seven——"

"For me?"

"Don't put me out. Eight—nine—ten."

"I dare not take it."

"Nonsense! Eleven, twelve. It will do you good. Thirteen!" added the speaker. "That will be quite sufficient to calm your nerves—I never was troubled with such things—and make you sleep."

"Sleep is what I most dread."

The captain's wife regarded her earnestly.

"I did not mean to offend you," added the prisoner, timidly.

"You have not offended me," was the reply. "Perhaps you have hurt me a little; but never mind that—soon get over it: am not very sensitive."

"I will take it," exclaimed Blanche; "it was wicked, ungrateful of me to hesitate for an instant, after such generous kindness."

"Perhaps you had better not," observed Mrs. Drake. "With such feelings upon your mind, it might only excite you. I offered it for the best."

"I am sure you did. Give me the cup."

"You really wish it?"

"Really."

"Take it, my dear," said the kind-hearted woman, her heart warming to her for her confidence. "Have no fear; I shall not quit the cabin to-night, and Sands has orders to swing his hammock within sound of my voice; not that it will be necessary to wake him," she added: "bad men are rarely brave ones."

Blanche drank the tea, and soon afterwards fell into a profound sleep. Her protectress felt her pulse with a professional air, listened to her breathing, threw a shawl over her feet, then lit the lamp, and opening the Bible which she held upon her knees, prepared to pass the night by her side.

When Ernest Welby came on board the Snake with his companion, his first question was for his sister, as he designated his victim. The captain informed him that she was in the cabin with her nurse, and properly cared for.

"It is little attention she requires," replied the hypocrite. "Solitude and the companionship of her faithful nurse are best for her."

John Bentley laid his hand upon his arm.

"Well," said the young villain.

"I wish I could persuade you to spare her," whispered the Englishman, as soon as Captain Drake had walked to another part of the deck.

The consul's relative answered him only by a scornful laugh.

"Spare her!" he repeated, his eyes flashing fire, "after having been struck twice by the clod of a husband!"

"At least, his blows were manly ones," observed his associate.

"A reproach?"

"No."

"A menace, then?"

"Neither one nor the other, Welby; it was a request. You have refused to listen to that; I have now only my advice to offer. Be cautious how you proceed. If the commander of the Snake is a simple-minded, he is an honest man. The entire crew are Englishmen."

"What then?"

"If they were to detect you in any foul play upon their countrywoman, you might meet with rough usage at their hands," answered Bentley.

"I am quite prepared to run the risk."

"They will deliver you up to justice at Liverpool," added his friend.

"They must catch me there first," thought Ernest Welby, well-knowing that the danger was a remote one.

"Come, what say you?"

Young as he was, the adventurer possessed that flexibility of character which moulds itself to almost every circumstance. He saw that the speaker was in earnest; regarded the crew—a set of fine, resolute-looking men—and decided that it would be best, at least for a while, to temporise.

"There may be some reason in what you say," he observed, "and I promise you——"

"To forego your purpose?" interrupted Bentley, eagerly.

"No, can't do that; but to give her fair play," he replied. "You don't know these half-castes as I do; their feelings are as variable as their tempers. Ten to one but before we arrive in Liverpool, she is as fond as she now appears terrified at me."

"In that case I can have nothing further either to advise or object," answered the Englishman, walking away.

Welby smiled secretly at his simplicity. So far from having abandoned his purpose, he adhered to it more tenaciously than ever.

In the evening, when coffee was brought in, he inquired rather anxiously for Mrs. Drake. The captain informed him that his wife preferred taking tea in her own cabin.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Well may dreams present us fictions,
Since our waking moments teem
With such fanciful convictions,
As make life itself a dream.
Half our daylight faith's a fable;
Sleep disports with shadows too,
Seeming, in their turn, as stable
As the world we wake to view.
CAMPBELL.

In China the most painful death inflicted on criminals is by depriving them of sleep. No torments invented by the cruel ingenuity of man, we are told, can equal this; the stake and cord are merciful compared with it. How grateful ought we then to feel to that benignant Being whose love has provided so constant a balm! Sleep is the *pabulum* of life; it falls like a feather from an angel's wing upon the worn lids of sorrow and fatigue, steeping the senses in forgetfulness, or visiting them with those sweet dreams which suck the venom from the wounds of the past, and strengthen us with hope for the future.

Sleep! how many an aching heart and toil-worn brain have cause to bless thee! Thou art Death's image, shorn of his terrors; the waking from thee an emblem of that final rising from the bed of earth, when the archangel's trumpet shall proclaim time to be no more.

Although Mrs. Drake was anything but of a poetical temperament—we question if she had ever read a hundred lines of poetry in her life, the Psalms and Dr. Watt's Hymns excepted—she was much struck by the placid expression which gradually stole over the pale countenance of Blanche. The rigid lines into which fear and agony had contracted the muscles of the face, the compression of the lips, disappeared, and her breath came gently and evenly.

"Yes, yes," Mrs. Drake murmured, as she gazed upon her, "sleep is a blessed thing. I wonder why I never thought so much of it before? I suppose because it comes as a matter of course to me."

How many blessings are made light of, because they come as a matter of course!

Presently Blanche smiled, and murmured the name of her husband.

"Poor thing! poor thing! so young, too!" said the watcher, looking up from the Bible, which still rested upon her knees; "it is well I am here to guard you."

It was well, for a few minutes afterwards Mrs. Drake detected the sounds of a light footstep stealthily approaching the cabin door. Some females would have felt alarmed or nervous under the circumstance; it had no such effect, however, upon her, unless to knit her brows, and give a stronger expression of determination to her features.

"The rascal!" she muttered to herself.

The next instant the door of the cabin was quietly opened, and Ernest Welby made his appearance, but started back in confusion when he beheld the captain's wife.

"You here!" he exclaimed.

"Where better could I be?" demanded the little woman, calmly, "than watching the sleep of innocence and suffering? I've heard a good deal in America about 'woman's mission,' but never understood what it meant till now. It is to take care of one another."

"My dear madam," said the young ruffian, uncertain, from her cool, collected manner, and the even tone in which she spoke, whether she divined the motive of his visit or not, "I really cannot allow you to fatigue yourself by watching all night, with my sister"

"*Sister!*" repeated Mrs. Drake, sarcastically.

"Let me request you to send the nurse to her. I will remain till she arrives. Believe me, I appreciate your kindness," added the hypocrite; "can never sufficiently thank you."

"Well!" exclaimed the little woman, "you have spoken truth for once. You never can sufficiently thank me for saving you from a base and bad action. You had better leave the cabin," she added, pointing to the door.

"I do not understand you."

"I am sorry for you, Mr. Welby, very sorry for you. You are a greater scoundrel than I suspected, and I regret having permitted my husband to charter the Snake to you."

"Having chartered her," observed the consul's relative, "it strikes me I am liberty to act as I please on board."

"I should like to see any man doing as he pleased on board *my ship*," replied the petticoat commander; "pretty discipline I should have!"

"Where is the nurse?"

"Do you mean the black woman?"

"Yes. Where is she?"

"Under hatches," said Mrs. Drake, coolly.

"Under hatches!"

"And in irons."

"Irons!" repeated Ernest Welby, wrathfully.

"Of course!" exclaimed the captain's wife. "Refused to obey orders and quit the cabin when I ordered her; drew her knife upon one of the crew—wounded him."

"This is intolerable! insolent!" interrupted Welby, his passion increasing every moment. "I must see your husband."

"Pray see him," said the lady, ironically.

"You have no right, virago! hag!——"

"Hav'n't I!" replied Mrs. Drake, without permitting herself to be in the slightest degree ruffled by the anything but complimentary epithets he applied to her. "We will discuss that point of maritime law when we arrive in Liverpool."

"Don't be too certain *that you will arrive there*," exclaimed the ruffian, with a bitter laugh.

"Indeed!"

"*The Mississippi is nearer than the Mersey.*"

The words had no sooner escaped him than Ernest Welby felt sensible of the imprudence his disappointment and fury had betrayed him into, and endeavored to turn it off with a laugh. The captain's wife regarded him earnestly.

"Thank you for the hint," she said. "I believe that you are villain enough for anything. The warning shall not be thrown away; and, sir, for the last time, quit the cabin. It is true we are alone—two weak women; one," she added, pointing to Blanche, "as you perceive, perfectly defenceless; but the other has only to raise her voice and speak the word, to cause you to be placed under hatches with your accomplice. You are a fine gentleman," she continued, ironically, "a very fine one, no doubt, but you would find such a position even more ridiculous than disagreeable."

The young wretch doubtless thought so too, and casting a look of disappointment towards his sleeping victim, rushed out of the cabin, muttering curses as he disappeared.

Mrs. Drake resumed her seat, first assuring herself that their conversation had not disturbed the slumber of Blanche, and tried to read again; but the attempt proved a vain one; the words of the sacred page seemed to dance before her eyes, and run into one another, till she could scarcely distinguish a single letter.

The menances of Ernest Welby had disturbed her; and, finding the effort to fix her attention useless, she reverently closed the holy volume.

"What could he mean," she murmured to herself, "by not reaching Liverpool? by the Mississippi being nearer than the Mersey? Of course it is nearer; but the wind is fair, and every hour lessens the distance. Can't make it out! I must think! think!"

And for several minutes the little woman remained buried in profound reflection.

"They were no idle words," she exclaimed, at last, "uttered in the heat of passion: there was a meaning and a danger in them—some wicked scheme. But then, Mr. Bentley, his partner. Such a respectable firm! He may have been deceived too. I must see my husband instantly."

Having come to this conclusion, she walked to the cabin door, and called for Sands.

The sturdy sailor was at her side, armed to the teeth, and ready for action in an instant.

"What's your wull, missis?" he demanded.

"Call the captain."

"The captain has only just turned in."

"Only just turned in!" repeated the lady, greatly astonished. "What time is it?"

"Eight bells (midnight), I reckon."

"And only just turned in!" observed the lady, angrily.

"Weel, missis," replied Sands, pulling his forelock as usual, "it was no the captain's fault, I'm thinking. The 'merican gentleman opened a case of furrin wine. Had it been gude, honest whisky, the thing wad not a happened."

"What would not have happened?"

"The captain wad a walked quietly to his berth, I'm thinkin', instead o' bein' carried; and that's just what it is, missis."

"What would become of the Snake," thought the angry wife, "if there were not two commanders on board?" But she said nothing, wisely reserving her observations for the private ear of her husband; and we think we may venture to assure our readers that they lost nothing of their force by being deferred.

"That will do, Sands," she said, half-closing the cabin door.

"Is the captain to be called at the usual time, missis?"

"Certainly," replied the lady, sharply; "and let the steward tell him I wish to speak with him."

Mrs. Drake found herself placed in very unusual circumstances. In the first place, she had Blanche to watch over and protect; that she felt to be her first duty, which no consideration should induce her to neglect: in the second, she began to entertain serious uneasiness respecting the safe arrival of the ship; and in the third, her husband, for the first time in his life, had got tipsy on board. But her energy rose with the occasion: so true is it that Providence rarely deserts those who do not desert themselves.

When the captain made his appearance the following morning it was with a very humble look. His better half assumed her most magisterial air, as she asked him if he were yet *capable* of listening to her.

"Of course, my love. Why not?"

It was a most indiscreet question; a hardened culprit would not have asked it.

"*Why not?*" repeated his wife; "but we will not enter into that subject now, Captain Drake."

"As you please, my dear," said her husband, in the tone of a man who suddenly experiences great relief. "Why have you passed the night out of your own cabin?"

"I intend to pass every night out of my own cabin till we arrive in port, Captain Drake."

"Oh, indeed!"

"And every day too," added the lady.

"Ah!"

There was something so irresistibly comic in the look of bewilderment which accompanied the ejaculation, that, despite the gravity of the occasion, his better half could scarcely suppress a smile.

"Listen to me," she said, "since you assure me you are capable of listening and understanding me. There has been mutiny and treachery on board."

Her hearer could not have felt more surprised if she had announced an earthquake.

In as few brief words as possible she informed him of the transactions of the night.

Captain Drake was not only an honest man, but a brave one. If any of our male readers, who have not yet entered that blessed state called matrimony, presume to smile at this last assertion, all we can say is—*wait*. We deny their qualification, at present, to form an opinion. "Experience teacheth," says the copy-book—a very useful lesson for men as well as school-boys.

"Infamous!" he exclaimed. "I will have no such doings on board the Snake."

"Where are you going?" demanded his wife, as he turned to quit the cabin.

"To seek Mr. Welby."

"You will do nothing of the kind."

"If you think best."

"Of course I think it best. He knows already what he has to expect should he attempt to renew his infamous conduct. It is not that which renders me unquiet."

"What then?"

"His menaces."

"Menaces!" repeated the husband, his honest countenance flushing with manly indignation. "Has any one dared to menace you on board my vessel?"

Had he been less excited, the speaker, in all probability, would have said "our vessel."

Mrs. Drake repeated the observation about the Mississippi being nearer than the Mersey. The old sailor knit his brow as he listened to it.

"What do you think?" asked his wife—an act of considerable condescension upon her part. "Can Mr. Bentley be a partner to any scheme."

"No."

"Think well over the circumstances."

"No," repeated the captain; "he has too great an interest at stake. Bentley! the richest merchant in Manchester! an Englishman, too! Impossible. But he may have been tricked, duped by the plausible promises of his partner in the speculation."

The lady nodded approvingly; the same thoughts had suggested themselves to her.

"I think I had better consult him," added the speaker.

"Well, perhaps you had," answered Mrs. Drake, slowly.

"And should anything occur to justify our suspicions?"

"Change your course," replied his wife. "Are our guns in fit order?"

"They shall be seen to."

"We can rely upon our crew?"

"To a man," replied the captain, hesitatingly; "but——"

"But what?"

"I suppose, my dear, you are acquainted with maritime law?"

"I know the laws of the merchant service," observed the petticoat commander.

"It is death to resist a vessel of war."

"Death?"

"At the yard-arm."

"In that case, never mind the guns," said his better half, after a pause, during which she weighed in her mind all the circumstances of the case. "Better to lose the ship than risk the lives of so many brave men. We must trust to our sails, a fair wind, and the protection of Providence."

"Amen, my love."

"And now," continued the lady, "one word: till we arrive in port, nothing stronger than six-water grog. You understand me?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Go on deck, and send the steward to me."

Shortly after the captain had quitted the cabin, Blanche awoke from her long refreshing slumber. When she recognized her protectress seated in the same spot, with the Bible upon her knees, exactly as she saw her before closing her eyes in sleep, she held out her hands and thanked her.

"I suppose," observed the Englishwoman, with a smile, "you can trust me now?"

"Trust you! now and always. Forgive my——"

"It was very natural," interrupted Mrs. Drake, good-humoredly; "done just the same in your place. You must make a good breakfast. Nothing like sea air for an appetite."

"Do you remain with me?" inquired Blanche, anxiously.

"Of course, my dear. Till we arrive in port I do not intend to leave you for an instant."

John Bentley felt exceedingly uneasy at the story of the captain; if vague suspicions of Welby's intentions had flashed across his mind, he had dismissed them instantly, as the creation of an over-anxious brain.

Twice he made the narrator repeat the threats, word for word.

"Impossible!" he muttered, half aloud; "he can never be such a villain. He must have some sense of honor."

The honest sailor pronounced the name of Blanche.

His hearer colored slightly.

"I do not pretend to excuse his conduct to her," he continued. "Where women are concerned, some men think every means lawful to arrive at the gratification of their desires, and yet act justly in their relations to those of their own sex. Welby may be one of them."

"*He may.*"

"His loss in the event of treachery, would nearly equal mine."

"You allude to the cargo?"

"Yes."

"And how about the ship? The Snake would prove a valuable prize; sound oak, English built: to say nothing of the satisfaction the Yankees would feel in condemning her," observed her commander. "By-the-by, did Welby ever tell you that he had been at sea?"

"Never."

"He must have passed years upon the water," continued the sailor. "I can tell it by his step, the critical eye with which he examined the build of the Snake, her rigging, when he first came on board. I shouldn't be surprised if it turned out, after all, that he was an officer in the American navy. Hush! he is coming towards us."

Bentley repressed the expression of surprise upon his lips; but the suspicions of the speaker had taken sudden and firm hold of his mind.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

BISSET, THE ANIMAL TEACHER.

Few individuals have presented so striking an instance of patience and eccentricity as Bisset, the extraordinary teacher of animals. He was a native of Perth, and an industrious shoemaker, until the notion of teaching animals attracted his attention in the year 1759. Reading an account of a remarkable horse shown at St. Germain, curiosity led him to experiment upon a horse and a dog, which he bought in London, and he succeeded in training these beyond all expectation. Two monkeys were the next pupils he took in hand, one of which he taught to dance and tumble on the rope, whilst the other held a candle in one paw for his companion, and with the other played the barrel-organ. These animals he also instructed to play several fanciful tricks; such as drinking to the company, riding and tumbling on a horse's back, and going through several dances with a dog.

All this, it may be said was very ridiculous. No doubt it was; at the same time the results showed the power of culture in subduing natural propensities. Bisset's teaching of cats was a signal instance of this power. Having procured three kittens, he began their education with his usual patience. He at length taught these miniature tigers to strike their paws in such directions on the dulcimer as to produce several regular tunes, having music books before them, and squalling at the same time in different keys or tones, first, second and third, by way of concert. He afterwards was induced to make a public exhibition of his animals, and the well-known Cat's Opera, in which they performed, was advertised in the Haymarket Theatre. The horse, the dog, the monkeys and the cats went through their several parts with uncommon applause to crowded houses; and in a few days Bisset found *himself possessed* of nearly a thousand pounds to reward his ingenuity and perseverance.

This success excited Bisset's desire to extend his dominion over the animals, including even the feathered kind. He procured a young leveret, and reared it to beat several marches on the drum with its hind legs, until it became a good, stout hare. He taught canary birds, linnets and sparrows to spell the name of any person in company, to distinguish the hour and minute of time, and perform many other surprising feats. He trained six turkey-cocks to go through a regular contra-dance. He also taught a turtle to fetch and carry like a dog.

A MISER IN HIGH LIFE.

Lord Barco, an ancestor of the Earl of Fife, was remarkable for practising that celebrated rule—"Get all you can, and keep all you can get." One day, walking down the avenue from his house, he saw a farthing lying at his feet, which he carefully cleaned. A beggar passing at the same time, entreated his lordship would give him the farthing, saying it was not worth a nobleman's attention. "Fin' a farthing to yoursel', puir body," replied his lordship, and carefully put the coin in his breeches pocket. In addition to being his own farthing finder, his lordship was his own factor and rent collector. A tenant who called upon him to pay his rent, happened to be deficient a farthing. This amount could not be excused, and the farmer had to pay the farthing. When the business was adjusted, the countryman said to his lordship: "Now, Barco, I would gie ye a shillin' for a sight o' a' the goud and siller ye hae." "Well, mon," replied Barco, "it's no cost ye ony mair;" and accordingly for, and in consideration of the aforesaid sum, in hand first well and truly paid, his lordship exhibited several iron boxes filled with gold and silver coin.—"Now," says the farmer, "I'm as rich as yoursel'." "Ay, mon," said his lordship, "how can that be?" "Because I've seen it—and you can do no mair."

WHICH IS THE HAPPIEST SEASON?

At a festal party of old and young, the question was asked: "Which season of life is the most happy?" After being freely discussed by the guests, it was referred for answer to the host, upon whom was the burden of fourscore years. He asked if they had noticed a grove of trees before the dwelling, and said: "When the spring comes, and in the soft air the buds are breaking on the trees, and they are covered with blossoms, I think, *How beautiful is spring!* And when the summer comes, and covers the trees with its heavy foliage, and singing-birds are among the branches, I think, *How beautiful is summer!* When the autumn loads them with golden fruit, and their leaves bear the gorgeous tint of frost, I think, *How beautiful is autumn!* And when it is *sere* winter, and there is neither foliage nor fruit, then I look up through the leafless branches, as I never could until now, and see the *stars* shine."

* * *

—Happiness is the very light and sun of the whole animated universe; and where she is not, it were better that nothing should be. Without her, wisdom is but a shadow, virtue a name; she is their sovereign mistress; for her alone they labor; to enjoy and to communicate her, is their effort, and the consummation of their toil.

* * *

—Politeness, like running water, smoothes the most rugged stone.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Clinging to this promontory,
Shall I rise or shall I fall?
Far above me gleams the glory
Overshining heaven's high wall,
I had climbed to, but my mortal
Came between me and the portal
So I could not see, for darkness,
Which way led the Narrow Road;
And I, shaming of my starkness,
From the angry eyes of God
Fled toward the unknown Sea
Of a lost soul's agony!

Hide me in some dread abysm,
Rocking mountains fall and hide!
Rushing floods, with Death's baptism
Cover me from God! I cried—
I am blind and hot with shame,
And the whirlwinds call my name!
* * * I am but a pale, weak woman,
Father! thrust from hope apart!
Keep this death out of my human,
Suffering, bleeding, loving heart,
For His sake, who once for *me*
Drained Death's lees—Gethsemane!

If it be so of my winning
To outclimb this mortal breath,
(From the nadir of my sinning
To my horizon of death,)
Wash the crimson white as wool,
In thy mercy overfull! * * *

Then a thunderbolt was shivered
On the blackness where I stood;
And a new land, golden-rivered,
Dawned, and caught the smile of God;
And a white, angelic hand
Reached toward me from that land!
Reached—and led me to the Jordan
Of Redemption, where I stand,
Soul-deep in his glorious pardon,
Out of reach of earthly land—
Yea! the red waves of this Sea
Cleanse me, of a verity!

Thro' my Father's sweet forgiving
Of my blind and halting faith,
All the bleakness of my living
I have lost in this my death;
And the shores are bright with angels,
Coming to me as evangels!
Now the hills are wrapped in splendor,
And the seas break into foam!
And all heaven, melodious, tender,
Swells the mighty "Welcome Home!"
In this temple seraph-trod,
Lo! I fall before Thee—God!!

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 25.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

ADVENTURE WITH WILD DOGS.

The rainy season was past, and the spring opened warm and bright—not with such warmth and brightness of spring time as comes to gladden the spirit in our own clime—but with the parching warmth that dries up the streams, and bakes the surface of the plains. Our preparations were all made for departure, and the natives were collected to see us off. Our horses and oxen came out well. Of the oxen not one had died, but all of them were better and stronger than when we turned them out. We had lost several of our horses by accident, but we had enough to serve us until we could find more, which we hoped to do when we reached the settlements upon the great river to the north-east.

Tickomy and his two brothers, Booboo and Zooky, were to go with us as guides and interpreters; and I promised myself that they would be of much service in the chase. Our oxen were yoked up early in the morning, and we took a fair start, old Bomus, with full a hundred of his people, accompanying us some miles on our way. When the chief got ready to turn back to his home, he showed very plainly that he had conceived a great affection for us. He shed tears as he held my hand for the last time, and I knew that he was sincere. He begged of me to come by the way of Gichy when I returned, and to make his village again my stopping-place. I could not give him any promise; but I told him we would come that way if we could.

That afternoon we fell in with a herd of springboks, and shot three of them; and towards night we had the good fortune to bag a fat buffalo; so we had fresh, fine steak for supper and breakfast.

Our aim was, to reach the splendid hunting country towards the Zambezi, which, as nearly as we could calculate, was six hundred miles distant. On the third day from Gichy, one of our wagons upset in crossing a stream, and we lost one of our best elephant tusks. We dragged in the mud one whole day, but the prize was gone past recovery. Abner would have stopped a week if the rest of us would have kept him company. It galled him terribly to make the entry of over seventy pounds of ivory in the list of our losses. However, we got the wagon safely out, and I considered that we were very fortunate in succeeding as well as we did.

At the end of a fortnight we struck a beautiful wooded plain, where game was plenty. There were buffaloes, wildebeests, and antelopes of various kinds; and we concluded to remain there a few days for sport. Accordingly we selected a favorable spot for our camp, and then we went out under the guidance of Tickomy and dug a lot of shooting-holes. These shooting-holes, it will be understood, are simple pits, about four feet deep, and large enough to admit of free movement. Within such a pit the hunter ensconses himself, and there waits for his game. If, however, the game does not come within shooting distance of its own accord, after-riders are sent out to drive it in.

We had one row of holes by the edge of an open plain, and here, on the first night, we had capital luck, bringing down four buffaloes and two blue wildebeests. The following night we tried some new holes; but the wind was unfavorable, and we did not meet with very good success. On the third night we concluded to try our old holes again, and before midnight we had shot three buffaloes. At this time the moon went down, and old Ben proposed that we should return to the camp; but I had no such idea. I desired to be at my post at the dawning of day, being assured that we should have a shot at more game at that time. Ben, however, declared that he could not stand the press. He could not sleep with any comfort in his hole, and yet sleep he must have. So he climbed out, with his rifle upon his shoulder, and started off. I asked him if he was sure he could find his way back to camp. He laughed immoderately at the idea of his not being able to find his way anywhere; and furthermore declared that, if it were not so dark, he would shoulder and carry in one of the dead buffaloes. He went away, leaving Harry and me alone. Abner had not come out with us, having had a slight touch of the "shakes" on the previous afternoon; and he had remained in camp to dose himself with old Dr. Millett's fever-tea. Abner was subject to these spells, and sometimes they were severe. While in the Southwest he had taken the fever and ague badly, and the tendency to "shaky spells" had not left him.

The pit which Harry occupied was about a hundred yards from mine, towards a point of shrubbery that made out abruptly into the plain; and he had taken that position so that game coming from beyond that quarter might pass close by him before it came within my range. It was about half-past twelve when Ben left us, and as soon as he was gone I called out to Harry and informed him that I was going to take a short nap. He replied that he was about to do the same thing. I had thrown a lot of soft-leaved boughs into my hole, and having so arranged my rifle that it would be ready for immediate use, I lay down and closed my eyes.

I was not long in falling asleep, and for awhile I slept very soundly. At length, however, I had a dream.

Some psychological philosophers have arrived at the conclusion that no man can dream more than a few seconds at a time. They say that the disturbing cause which produces the dream instantaneously awakens the dreamer, and that what is impressed upon the waking mind as a vision, or phantasy, of long duration, was but the simple flash of mental perception, taking in a broad array of incident as the eye takes in, at a single sweep, the thousand details of a landscape.

This may all be true. I am not able to deny it. But, on that night, it seemed as though I dreamed a full hour. At first I sat upon the stone of my own door, at home, and listened to the music of our band. It seemed to be a scene of old times. Wirt Virgin was the leader, and played an E-flat bugle. A little while the music was soft and sweet, and then the lips of the players seemed to grow thick and husky, and the notes became dull and musicless. Still the men played on, bellowing with all their might, their cheeks distending, and their eyes ready to start out of their heads. Presently the brazen instruments squealed out with startling force, and the discordance became terrible. The drums, which had at first seemed muffled, now sounded cracked and grating, and the drummers beat upon them furiously. I called out to the leader and begged of him to stop; but the man who had been leading was gone, and a stranger had taken his place. I looked around upon the rest of the crew, and found that the change had been complete. *My friends had all gone, and strangers were in their places.* Anon came another change. The wind instruments disappeared, and tamborines, banjos, and hurdy-gurdys took their place. Mercy! what a noise! The confusion at Babel could not have been worse. I stopped my ears with my fingers, and tried to shut out the awful din. Awhile I remained thus, and then another change. The musicians had all become monkeys, and every monkey had a tin drum, upon which he beat with diabolical fury. This lasted for some time, and then the apish crew formed into platoons and advanced towards me, beating and chattering all the while like so many demons. This was more than I could bear, and I leaped up to frighten the intruders away. As I came upon my feet I awoke. The band of music, the drums, the banjos, the tin-pans, and the monkeys, had been all the creatures of a dream; but not so the unearthly din.

The day was just breaking, and as my waking senses came to my assistance my ears were saluted by a sound so strange that at first I had my doubts about being awake. I rubbed my eyes, and soon convinced myself that I was not in the land of dreams.

Not far away lay the three buffaloes which we had shot by moonlight, and around the carcasses were collected a troop of wild dogs. I say, collected around the carcasses. I might say that the whole open plain was full of them. Perhaps some fifty of them—perhaps a hundred—were tearing away at the fallen game, while the others, beyond my power to number, were dashing to and fro, snapping and snarling and yelping. I do not think I overstate the matter when I say that there were a thousand of them in the troop. They were wolfish-looking beasts, with sharp snouts and pricked ears, and covered with coarse, shaggy hair. As soon as I arose in my hole three platoons of them came dashing towards me growling most ferociously. It was light enough for me to see that the dead buffaloes were being rapidly devoured, and I had no doubt that the ravenous beasts would devour me with keenest relish if they could once get a taste of my blood.

When I saw the troop advancing upon me, I confess that, for the moment, my knees shook and my heart throbbed painfully. If the snarling, snapping imps attacked me, how was I to defend myself? I should be torn in pieces instantly. I looked towards Harry's hole, and saw him standing up, with his rifle in his hand; but the dogs had not yet paid attention to him. About fifty of the ugly animals came close to my hole—came so near that I could almost feel their hot breaths—and there stopped and snuffed. I held my breath, and grasped my rifle for a club. But the dogs did not touch me at that turn. In a few seconds they wheeled about, and dashed away towards where their companions were feasting upon the buffaloes; but there was no room for them at that board, and they soon came back again, this time advancing almost to the edge of my hole, and growling more furiously than before.

Gentle reader, were you ever attacked by a single hound or mastiff? Or, did you ever find yourself brought to a stand-still by a faithful watch-dog? Do you remember how you shrank away in fear and trembling? Then think of me in my present situation, and do not wonder that I had some misgivings.

However, it never was my nature to give up while strength lasted; and as the dogs came close to me, and stopped again, I began to collect my senses, and to reason. The simple killing of two or three hundred of their number would have availed nothing. Physical force, such as I could command, would have been but as a straw against a whirlwind. I had but one hope. I might have moral power enough to overawe the rascals, and send them away. At all events, if I could not overcome them by such suasion, I must myself, be overcome; so I determined to try it. Gathering my energies for the effort, I leaped up from my hole, and swung my arms around, and shouted with all my might. The dogs drew back and stopped their noise. Then I shouted again, and discharged my rifle into the air. At this the troop turned their tails towards me, and fled away as fast as their legs would carry them. In a few moments more Harry joined me, and as success thus far had given us both confidence in our power, we made a sounding charge upon those that remained by the carcasses, and they fled like so many sheep, and were pretty soon lost to sight in the wood.

Our three buffaloes were about done for, there being little left beside bones and torn shreds of cord and hide; but we did not mourn over our loss. The adventure with the wild dogs furnished a better page for our diary than could the capture of a few buffaloes have done.

We returned to our camp, reaching the spot just as old Gash and Fitzeben had got breakfast ready; but one of our number was missing. Ben Gilroy had not made his appearance. We had supposed that we should find him in the camp; and Abner had supposed that he would come in with us. It must have been as I had feared it would be. The old fellow had got lost; and straightway we started out in search after him. Harry and myself, with Tickomy, took one route, while Abner, with Booboo and Zooky, took another. We had gone but a short distance when Fitzeben came puffing along after us, declaring that he must help find his poor mas'r.

I took the course which I thought most likely to strike Ben's track, and pretty soon we found ourselves in a thicket of mimosas, where Tickomy discovered the print of the old fellow's foot. From this mark we pushed on, and in half an hour we heard our lost companion crying for help. We stopped and listened, and another sound fell upon our ears. The cries of Ben Gilroy arose loud and earnest, and mingling with them came a snapping and growling very much like what Harry and I had heard while in our shooting holes. We hurried on, and in a few minutes more we discovered the object of our search. We stopped, and Harry and I laughed outright. Fitzeben also laughed.

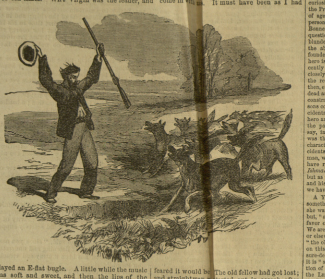
There was old Ben, perched away up in the top of a tree, while beneath him, upon the ground, was a troop of wild dogs, leaping and snapping, and growling and barking, as though they would tear him to pieces the moment they got hold of him. A very slight show of resolution on the part of Harry and myself sent the dogs galloping off into the forest; and when Ben saw that his tormentors were gone, he came down. He was pale and cold, and his limbs were so stiff that he could hardly stand, though a little exercise soon limbered him up.

He told us that he had been in that tree more than five hours. He had lost his way on his attempted return to the camp, and while groping about in the dark he had heard the tramp of wild animals. He found a tree, and succeeded in getting clear of the earth just as the pack came up. At first he had supposed them to be wolves, and he was not undeceived until daylight revealed to him their true character.

As we returned to our wagons I related to Ben the psssage which Harry and I had had with the same sort of animals; but we would not allow him to flatter himself with the idea that his adventure would make a very brilliant page in the record of his experience, though he was inclined to think that he had had a very narrow escape from a horrible death.

Later in the day Fitzeben delivered himself of the following remark, and the reader will appreciate its significance when I inform him that the darkey did not speak without good occasion:

"By golly! if Mas'r Ben gits frightened many more times, dar won't be no brandy left for de rest ob us!"



CHANGES OF TIME.

In Asia Minor we tread upon a soil rich in interesting and splendid recollections, with an existing population completely debased by ignorance and slavery. The glory of twenty different nations that once flourished here, has been extinguished; flocks wander over the tomb of Achilles and of Hector; and the throne of Mithridates and the Antiochuses have disappeared as well as the palaces of Priam and Crœsus. The merchants of Smyrna do not inquire whether Homer was born within their walls; the fine sky of Ionia no longer inspires either painters or poets; the same obscurity covers with its shades the banks of the Jordan and the Euphrates. The republic of Moses is not to be found. The harps of David and Isaiah are silent forever; the wandering Arabian comes, indifferent and unmoved, to rest the poles of his tent against the shattered columns of Palmyra; Babylon has also fallen beneath the stroke of an avenging destiny, and that city which reigned supreme over oppressed Asia, has scarcely left behind it a trace that can show where the ramparts of Semiramis were raised. "I have seen," says a traveller, "the accomplishment of that prophecy, 'Tyre, the queen of the nations, shall be made like the top of a rock, where the fishermen shall spread their nets.'"

—The memories of childhood, the long, far away days of boyhood, the mother's love and prayers, the voice of a departed playfellow, the ancient church and schoolmaster in all their green and hallowed associations come upon the heart in the autumn time of life, like the passage of a pleasantly remembered dream, and cast a ray of their own purity and sweetness over it.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Orleans writes from East Shelby, Orange County, New York: "Mr. R. Bonner—*Sir*:—The Ledger is a very popular paper in this Orleans County. I think no story ever published by you has ever been so popular as Mrs. Southworth's beautiful story, 'Out of the Depths.' The authoress in one of the earlier chapters of the story gives *additional* interest to the tale of 'Ishmael Worth,' by asserting that he was a real personage, his name only being fictitious. A few weeks ago you published another paragraph, separate from the story, in which it was stated that the 'hero' of the story, Ishmael Worth, was in after life a learned jurist, Attorney-General of the United States, and a popular candidate for the Presidency The question is respectfully asked: Who could it have been? To this no satisfactory answer has ever been given. At first I thought William Wirt, at one time Attorney-General of the United States, was the real hero of this interesting story. In a recent number of this story, 'Reuben Gray,' in conversation with 'Hannah Worth,' is made to say, in substance, that the summer previously his sister Kitty had gone with her husband to California, attracted thither by the Gold Diggings then recently discovered in California. At this time Ishmael was seventeen years old. It is about fifteen years since gold was discovered. He would consequently be but thirty-two years of age at this time. Not old enough to be a candidate for President. Now I do not expect you to print in your answers to correspondents the real name of Ishmael Worth; but you will confer a favor upon hundreds of subscribers if you will reconcile the statements made above, with the paragraph before alluded to, which so much excited our curiosity. How could Ishmael Worth be a candidate for the Presidency, when he was not, by my own showing, of age required by the Constitution (viz. 35)? Some person has blundered. Who is the guilty party, Mr. Bonner? We shall look for a speedy answer to this question under the head of Orleans." No one has blundered, except the correspondent who favors us with the above friendly letter. When a domestic novel is founded upon facts but recently transpired; when the hero is taken from the character of a great man but recently deceased; when the incidents of the true story are closely followed in the fictitious one, and the character of the real man carefully copied in the imaginary one—then, every sentiment of reverential affection for the noble dead and delicate respect to his living descendants, must constrain the author, not only to alter the names of persons concerned in the history, but also the dates of its incidents. Thus the author has changed the name of the hero and advanced the date of his story. In regard to the paragraph to which you allude, we have only to say, in that paragraph we wrote of the real man who was the prototype of Ishmael Worth, and from whose character and career the character of Ishmael and the incidents of his story have been carefully copied—the real man, who, having lived some years ago, *was* all that we have represented him. We wrote of *his past*, not of *Ishmael's future;* we know not what the latter may be; but as up to this point of the story Ishmael's character and history have closely resembled those of his prototype, we have reason to believe that they will continue to do so.

A Young Lady, in Cincinnati, requests us to "write something in favor of dress parties on a grand scale," as she wants to have one, and her father is opposed to it, but, "as he believes in the Ledger, an article in it in favor of parties might do away with his opposition." We are sorry to disoblige any young lady, in Cincinnati or elsewhere, but we really must say that we agree with "the old gentleman," in this case. If there is anything on this earth more doleful, more joy-killing, more pleasure-destroying than all other so-called "social" things, it is "a dress party on a grand scale." Such an institution of torture can never command the approbation of the Ledger. We look upon such "organized stupidities" not only as in the highest degree destructive of social enjoyment, but as the fecund source of extravagance, dissipation, and other like immoralities, being, as they too often are, the preludes to bankruptcy and the vestibules of vice. A party of *friends*, who know and appreciate one another, and who can meet without formality, and talk and laugh, and dance and sing with perfect freedom, is often a most delightful affair; but when you come to have a "grand dress party," composed of roomsful of strangers who do not care a fig for each other, and all crowding and jostling along—the young men feeling whether their neck-ties are properly adjusted, looking vacantly round and considering what they shall do next—the ladies sitting disconsolately, waiting for some one to speak to them, and wishing they knew what to do with their fingers—while the hostess flutters about the doorway, keeping a poor, weary, hypocritical smile on her face, and racking her brain to find the requisite nothings wherewith to greet her bored guests as they enter—is not all this enough to excite the laughter or the tears of gods and men, according as they may be cynical or sympathetic? And *this* is the purgatory into which you want us to help plunge your father! We shall do no such cruel thing.

Doctor.—Your complaints against the "exactions of the law," as you term it, are wholly without foundation save in your own selfishness and shortsightedness. Where would you have been without the law to uphold and protect you all the past years of your life? What would your property be good for now, were it not for the strong, protecting arm of the law? What *is* the *law*? Have you ever asked yourself that question? The law is simply the rules and regulations which the people have adopted for their mutual guidance and protection. That is all that your great bugaboo consists of. Of course, a bad rule or law is sometimes adopted; but when such an error occurs it is soon corrected, or, at least, it might soon be corrected, if the people would set about having it done. The *people* have it all their own way so far as law-making is concerned; and if they choose to let a bad law stand on the statute book, it is their own affair. But the only safe way for all parties is, to obey the law, whatever it may be, while it *is* the law; and have such laws as may be found to be unjust repealed or made right at the earliest opportunity.

Outcast.—If your story is true, you have had great injustice done to you. But we are unwilling to believe that any father would treat his son, without cause, as you say your father has treated you. Have you not omitted to state some provocation on your part—or, at least, some act done by you, which, though in your opinion innocent or justifiable, seemed, or might have seemed, to your father to be a provocation? When a young man quarrels with his father he is very apt to put a most liberal construction on all his own acts and motives and quite a contrary one on all of his father's. This is probably so in your case. Not that we mean to charge you with intentional unfairness, but simply that we wish to call your attention to the course which unregenerate human nature is almost certain to take whenever it becomes embittered in a quarrel. Our advice to you is, that you study your case all over from beginning to end, imagining yourself to be a father with a son who has acted precisely as you have done, and see if you cannot discover enough flaws in your own conduct to justify your father in at least a portion of his behavior towards you.

D. H. B.—The chief difficulty in family government arises from the fact that so few parents ever learn to govern themselves. It was said of old that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." The fact is, that the ruling of his own spirit is about the last accomplishment ever arrived at by mortal man; and the remark is equally true as to immortal woman. Hence, the government of children is poor enough, as a general thing. In fact, it is in too many cases no government at all, but simply the venting of some father's, or mother's, or teacher's spite upon a child that has done something to stir up the evil passions of one's nature. You say that the more you punish your children the worse they seem to grow. That may very well be, if you punish them because you are annoyed or angered at something they have done. A parent should never punish a child when he is the least bit "put out" with it, or for any reason whatever except the highest good of the child itself.

Juno.—We do not know as a lady *deserves* any *credit* for personal beauty, but she will be pretty certain to *obtain* credit and admiration both for it, or on account of it. It is all very well for moralists to argue that beauty is only skin deep, that it is fleeting, that it is a mere accident, that it is no indication of moral, mental or spiritual worth, and all that; but the fact remains that *beauty is a power*. It is true that when a beautiful woman is discovered to be ignorant, or bad-tempered, or low-minded, or anything else that is repulsive, the shock is greater than it would have been if she had been homely; but, nevertheless, *at first sight* beauty will in most cases carry the day against all competitors; and when it happens to be united with great accomplishments and moral worth, it becomes almost irresistible. Therefore, O Juno, despise not beauty, but fortify it by every possible excellence.

C. A. P.—Would you think it right for any one to pay his addresses to your "intended," if you had one, in case you were necessarily absent from home for two years, or more, or less? Do as you would wish to be done by.

Jennie.—When a lady and gentleman are passing out of a crowded concert room, or church, the gentleman should slightly precede his companion, so as to make way for her through the crowd.

Traveller.—It is not likely that you could now get in Rome such dishes as the ancient epicures used to delight in; and if you could, it is extremely doubtful if you would be able to eat them. It is a queer notion for a young man to go to Rome, in these days, for the purpose of pleasing his palate. According to your own account of your tastes, you would not be able to tolerate a Roman feast of the olden time at all. Instead of making soup their first course, the "masters of the world" (but not of the art of cookery) actually commenced their dinners with broiled pudding, which they served on silver gridirons. "Fingers were made before forks," says the proverb; and the Romans having no forks, used their fingers. After the broiled dumpling, came a delectable fricassee of dormice, with a gravy of honey and poppy juice. Sheep's head, smothered in peas and sauced with saffron, was another of their delicacies, and a hare, stuffed with unmentionable horrors and furnished with wings to represent Pegasus, the hackney of the Muses, was also considered "prime." But the grand dish of all was a roasted wild boar, rendered detestable with a profusion of garlic, and bearing on his tusks baskets filled with Syrian dates. This choice article was something like the dainty dish that was set before the king, for on the carcass being opened, out flew four-and-twenty (or more) blackbirds, thrushes, nightingales, &c. Other boars were brought in half-boiled and half-roasted, and filled inside with a *pigment* composed of the most fearful ingredients. Fancy fifty or a hundred fellows in red and yellow gowns and scarfs, lolling on couches and luxuriating on this sort of provant. No wonder Rome declined and fell under such a regimen! We consider it in the highest degree discreditable to Cæsar and Pompey, that upon one occasion they dined on the like fare with the gluttonous Lucullus, and that the bill for the trio was five thousand dollars! Three fifty-cent shinplasters, thanks to modern taste! will provide three discriminating epicures with a much better dinner in these Christian times.

B. W. and R.—"A party of us have had a dispute," say these correspondents, "in regard to a question which we have finally agreed to leave to the Ledger for decision: Can a *college* exist without a *building* in which to meet? That is the question. We know that all colleges *do* have buildings in which to meet, but think that a college *could* exist without such an edifice. Taking Webster's Dictionary for authority, and reasoning from the definition therein given, we maintain that a building is quite unnecessary (though very useful) to the existence of a college. We consider it of subordinate consequence. We think the word college, as applied to a building, was derived from an association of learned men for the diffusion of useful knowledge. That is, the community itself was first called a college, and afterwards the building in which they held meetings came to be known by the same appellation. Our opponents, taking the ground that a college *can not* exist without a building in which to meet at stated periods, necessarily make the faculty and students of such an institution of secondary importance to the building; which view of the case is, in our opinion, absurd. Will the Ledger please give us its opinion?" A college—that is to say, a society of persons engaged in the pursuits of literature, including the faculty and students, may of course exist without having a building in which to meet. They may *rent* a hall, or a suite of rooms; or, when it should be necessary for them to assemble, they might meet under a tent, or in the open air. A *church* is often organized and put in operation before any edifice is erected for the accommodation of its members. Even a national government is sometimes organized and put in working order without owning a government house or even a government office.

Devisr.—After loving a lady six years, without being able to get an introduction to her, although you have "tried every way possible to do so," you are entitled to the privilege of informing *her* of your dilemma, either by note or word of mouth. Why not call at her house, and ask her mother or father to permit you to call on her? The idea that you have "tried every way possible" is absurd. There are doubtless many ways which a brave wooer would have hit upon in less than six years. We suspect that you are one of those faint-hearted ones who are not apt to win fair ladies.

Monitor.—It is held by those who have experimented in such matters, that any stone, ball, or other body thrown perpendicularly into the air, will be just as long in coming down as it was in going up, and that it will pass through the same spaces in coming down in just the same time that it passed through them in going up. By consulting some work on natural philosophy, you will find this matter explained and illustrated with diagrams, which will enable you to understand the laws which govern the rise and fall of projectiles.

T. G. B.—If you have lost the ring which the young lady gave you in exchange for one that you presented to her, tell her so. Of course you cannot return it. You must be your own judge as to the cause of her casting you off. It may be that she is only trying your temper and constancy. Girls in love are full of freaks—sometimes—and do queer things without meaning any harm; at least, so people say who pretend to know all about them.

J. W. M.—We never had any experience with "flirting girls," and so do not know how to manage them; but we have heard it said that if a lover finds that he has become betrothed to a flirt, the best way to cure her is to go vigorously into the same line of business himself.

Nameless Correspondents.—We receive a great many communications without any signature. It would be better for each correspondent to put some good signature to his communication. Some signature that is perfectly anonymous, and that will give no clue to the writer or the matter written about, would be the best.

A. E. F.—You can inform your friend, with perfect safety, that "complected" is *not* a "dictionary word." Therefore, to say that "that young lady is handsomely *complected*" would be incorrect. The right phrase would be, "that young lady has a handsome complexion."

N. Y.—If the young lady will *not* betrothe herself to you, we certainly know no way of making her. If you have tried over and over again to induce her to do so without avail, all you can do, in case you are determined to win her consent, is to keep trying.

R. S. C.—If you should insist on the young lady's changing her religion, she would in all probability refuse to marry you.

Tip-top.—You must hunt up your own jewelry. We do not make a practice of directing people where they can make "good bargains" of any kind.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next*

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